

THE
VICAR
OF
WAKEFIELD:
A
TALE.



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OF
WAKEFIELD:
A
TALE.

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

Sperate miseri, cavete felices.

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A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THERE are an hundred faults in this thing , and an hundred things might be said to prove them beauties. But it is needless. A book may be amusing with numerous errors , or it may be very dull without a single absurdity. The hero of this piece unites in himself the three greatest characters upon earth ; he is a priest , an husbandman , and the father of a family. He is drawn as ready to teach , and ready to obey , as simple in affluence , and majestic in adversity. In this age of opulence and refinement whom can such a character please ? Such as are fond of high life , will turn with disdain from the simplicity of his country fire-side. Such as mistake ribaldry for humour , will find no

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wit in his harmless conversation, and such as have been taught to deride religion, will laugh at one whose chief stores of comfort are drawn from futurity.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

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THE
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TALE.

CHAP. I.

The description of the family of Wakefield; in which a kindred likeness prevails as well of minds as of persons.

I WAS ever of opinion that the honest man who married and brought up a large family, did more service than he who continued single, and only talked of population. From this motive, I had scarce taken orders a year, before I began to think seriously of matrimony, chose my wife as she did her wedding gown, not for a fine glossy surface,

but such qualities as would wear well. To do her justice, she was a good-natured notable woman; and as for breeding, there were few country ladies who at that time could shew more. She could read any English book without much spelling, and for pickling, preserving, and cookery, none could excell her. She prided herself much also upon being an excellent contriver in house-keeping; yet I could never find that we grew richer with all her contrivances.

However, we loved each other tenderly; and our fondness increased with age. There was in fact nothing that could make us angry with the world or each other. We had an elegant house, situated in a fine country, and a good neighbourhood. The year was spent in moral or rural amusements; in visiting our rich neighbours, or relieving such as were poor. We had no revolutions to fear, nor fatigues to undergo; all our adventures were by the fire-side, and all our migrations from the blue bed to the brown.

As we lived near the road, we often had the traveller or stranger come to taste our gooseberry wine, for which we had great reputation; and I profess with the veracity of an historian, that I never knew one of them find fault with it. Our cousins too, even to the fortieth remove, all remembered their affinity, without any help from the Herald's office, and came very frequently to see us.

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Some of them did us no great honour by these claims of kindred; for literally speaking, we had the blind, the maimed, and the halt amongst the number. However, my wife always insisted, that as they were the same *flesh and blood* with us, they should sit with us at the same table. So that if we had not very rich, we generally had very happy friends about us; for this remark will hold good thro' life, that the poorer the guest, the better pleased he ever is with being treated: and as some men gaze with admiration at the colours of a tulip, and others are smitten with the wing of a butterfly, so I was by nature an admirer of happy human faces. However, when any one of our relations was found to be a person of very bad character, a troublesome guest, or one we desired to get rid of, upon his leaving my house for the first time, I ever took care to lend him a riding coat, or a pair of boots, or sometimes an horse of small value, and I always had the satisfaction of finding he never came back to return them. By this the house was cleared of such as we did not like; but never was the family of Wakefield known to turn the traveller or the poor dependant out of doors.

Thus we lived several years in a state of much happiness, not but that we sometimes had those little rubs which providence sends to enhance the value of its favours. My or-

chard was often robbed by school-boys, and my wife's custards plundered by the cats or the children. The Squire would sometimes fall asleep in the most pathetic parts of my sermon, or his lady return my wife's civilities at church with a mutilated curtesy. But we soon got over the uneasiness caused by such accidents, and usually in three or four days we began to wonder how they vext us.

My children, the offspring of temperance, as they were educated without softness, so they were at once well formed and healthy; my sons hardy and active, my daughters dutiful and blooming. When I stood in the midst of the little circle, which promised to be the supports of my declining age, I could not avoid repeating the famous story of Count Abensberg, who in Henry II's progress through Germany, when other courtiers came with their treasures, brought his thirty-two children and presented them to his sovereign as the most valuable offering he had to bestow. In this manner, though I had but six, I considered them as a very valuable present made to my country, and consequently looked upon it as my debtor. Our eldest son was named George, after his uncle, who left us ten thousand pounds. Our second child, a girl, I intended to call after her aunt Griffel; but my wife, who, during her pregnancy, had been reading romances, insisted upon her being called Olivia. In less

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than another year we had a daughter again, and now I was determined that Griffel should be her name; but a rich relation taking a fancy to stand godmother, the girl was, by her directions, called Sophia; so that we had two romantic names in the family; but I solemnly protest I had no hand in it. Moses was our next, and after an interval of twelve years, we had two sons more.

It would be fruitless to deny my exultation when I saw my little ones about me; but the vanity and the satisfaction of my wife were even greater than mine. When our visitors would usually say, "Well, upon my word, " Mrs Primrose, you have the finest children in the whole country".—"Ay, neighbour," she would answer, "they are as heaven made them, handsome enough, if they be good enough; for handsome is that handsome does". And then she would bid the girls hold up their heads; who, to conceal nothing, were certainly very handsome. Mere outside is so very trifling a circumstance with me, that I should scarce have remembered to mention it, had it not been a general topic of conversation in the country. Olivia, now about eighteen, had that luxuriancy of beauty with which painters generally draw Hebe; open, sprightly, and commanding. Sophia's features were not so striking at first; but often did more certain execution; for they were soft, modest, and alluring. The one van-

quished by a single blow, the other by efforts successively repeated.

The temper of a woman is generally formed from the turn of her features, at least it was so with my daughters. Olivia wished for many lovers, Sophia to secure one. Olivia was often affected from too great a desire to please. Sophia even represt excellence from her fears to offend. The one entertained me with her vivacity when I was gay, the other with her senie when I was serious. But these qualities were never carried to excess in either, and I have often seen them exchange characters for a whole day together. A suit of mourning has transformed my coquet into a prude, and a new set of ribbands given her younger sister more than natural vivacity. My eldest son George was bred at Oxford, as I intended him for one of the learned professions. My second boy Moses, whom I designed for business, received a sort of a miscellaneous education at home. But it would be needless to attempt describing the particular characters of young people that had seen but very little of the world. In short, a family-likeness prevailed through all, and, properly speaking, they had but one character, that of being all equally generous, credulous, simple, and inoffensive.

C H A P . I I .

Family misfortunes. The loss of fortune only serves to increase the pride of the worthy.

THE temporal concerns of our family were chiefly committed to my wife's management, as to the spiritual I took them entirely under my own direction. The profits of my living, which amounted to but thirty-five pounds a year, I gave to the orphans and widows of the clergy of our diocese; for having a sufficient fortune of my own, I was careless of temporalities and felt a secret pleasure in doing my duty without reward. I also set a resolution of keeping no curate, and of being acquainted with every man in the parish, exhorting the married men to temperance and the bachelors to matrimony; so that in a few years it was a common saying, that there were three strange wants at Wakefield, a parson wanting pride, young men wanting wives, and ale-houses wanting customers.

Matrimony was always one of my favourite topics, and I wrote several sermons to prove its utility and happiness: but there was a peculiar tenet which I made a point of supporting; for I maintained with Whiston, that it was unlawful for a priest of the

church of England, after the death of his first wife, to take a second, or, to express it in one word, I valued myself upon being a strict monogamist.

I was early initiated into this important dispute, on which so many laborious volumes have been written. I published some tracts upon the subject myself, which, as they never sold, I have the consolation of thinking are read only by the happy *Few*. Some of my friends called this my weak side; but alas! they had not like me made it the subject of long contemplation. The more I reflected upon it, the more important it appeared. I even went a step beyond Whiston in displaying my principles: as he had engraven upon his wife's tomb that she was the *only* wife of William Whiston; so I wrote a similar epitaph for my wife, tho' still living, in which I extolled her prudence, œconomy, and obedience till death; and having got it copied fair, with an elegant frame, it was placed over the chimney-piece, where it answered several very useful purposes. It admonished my wife of her duty to me, and my fidelity to her; it inspired her with a passion for fame, and constantly put her in mind of her end.

It was thus, perhaps, from hearing marriage so often recommended, that my eldest son, just upon leaving college, fixed his affections upon the daughter of a neighbour-

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ing clergyman, who was a dignitary in the church, and in circumstances to give her a large fortune: but fortune was her smallest accomplishment. Miss Arabella Wilmot was allowed by all, except my two daughters, to be completely pretty. Her youth, health, and innocence, were still heightened by a complexion so transparent, and such an happy sensibility of look, that even age could not gaze with indifference. As Mr Wilmot knew that I could make a very handsome settlement on my son, he was not averse to the match; so both families lived together in all that harmony which generally precedes an expected alliance. Being convinced by experience, that the days of courtship are the most happy of our lives, I was willing enough to lengthen the period; and the various amusements which the young couple every day shared in each other's company, seemed to increase their passion. We were generally awaked in the morning by music, and on fine days rode a-hunting. The hours between breakfast and dinner the ladies devoted to dress and study: they usually read a page, and then gazed at themselves in the glass, which even philosophers might own often presented the page of greatest beauty. At dinner my wife took the lead; for as she always insisted upon carving every thing herself, it being her mother's way, she gave us upon these occa-

sions the history of every dish. When we had dined, to prevent the ladies leaving us, I generally ordered the table to be removed; and sometimes, with the music-master's assistance, the girls would give us a very agreeable concert. Walking out, drinking tea, country-dances, and forfeits, shortened the rest of the day, without the assistance of cards, as I hated all manner of gaming, except backgammon, at which my old friend and I sometimes took a two-penny hit. Nor can I here pass over an ominous circumstance that happened the last time we played together. I only wanted to fling a *quatre*, and yet I threw *deuce ace* five times running.

Some months were elapsed in this manner, till at last it was thought convenient to fix a day for the nuptials of the young couple who seemed earnestly to desire it. During the preparations for the wedding, I need not describe the busy importance of my wife, nor the fly looks of my daughters: in fact, my attention was fixed on another object, the completing a tract which I intended shortly to publish in defence of monogamy. As I looked upon this as a master-piece both for argument and style, I could not in the pride of my heart avoid shewing it to my old friend Mr Wilmot, as I made no doubt of receiving his approbation; but too late I discovered that he was

most violently attached to the contrary opinion, and with good reason; for he was at that time actually courting a fourth wife. This, as may be expected, produced a dispute attended with some acrimony, which threatened to interrupt our intended alliance: but on the day before that appointed for the ceremony, we agreed to discuss the subject at large.

It was managed with proper spirit on both sides: he asserted that I was heterodox, I retorted the charge: he replied, and I rejoined. In the mean time, while the controversy was hottest, I was called out by one of my relations, who, with a face of concern, advised me to give up the dispute, and allow the old gentleman to be a husband, if he could, at least till my son's wedding was over. "How", cried I, "relinquish the cause of truth, and let him be an husband, already driven to the very verge of absurdity! You might as well advise me to give up my fortune as my argument". "That fortune", returned my friend, "I am now sorry to inform you is almost nothing. Your merchant in town, in whose hands your money was lodged, has gone off, to avoid a statute of bankruptcy, and it is thought has not left a shilling in the pound. I was unwilling to shock you or the family with the account till after the wedding: but now it

» may serve to moderate your wrath in
» the argument; for, I suppose, your own
» prudence will enforce the necessity of dis-
» sembling at least till your son has the
» young lady's fortune secure ».—«Well,»
returned I, «if what you tell me be true,
» and if I am to be a beggar, it shall never
» make me a rascal, or induce me to disa-
» vow my principles. I'll go this moment
» and inform the company of my circum-
» stances; and as for the argument, I even
» here retract my former concessions in the
» old gentleman's favour, nor will I allow
» him now to be an husband either *de jure*,
» *de facto*, or in any sense of the expres-
» sion ».

It would be endless to describe the different sensations of both families when I divulged the news of my misfortunes; but what others felt was slight to what the young lovers appeared to endure. Mr Wilmot, who seemed before sufficiently inclined to break off the match, was by this blow soon determined: one virtue he had in perfection, which was prudence, too often the only virtue that is left us unimpaired at seventy-two.

C H A P. III.

A migration. The fortunate circumstances of our lives are generally found at last to be of our own procuring.

THE only hope of our family now was, that the report of our misfortunes might be malicious or premature : but a letter from my agent in town soon came with a confirmation of every particular. The loss of fortune to myself alone would have been trifling ; the only uneasiness I felt was for my family, who were to be humble without such an education as could render them callous to contempt.

Near a fortnight passed away before I attempted to restrain their affliction ; for premature consolation is but the remembrance of sorrow. During this interval, my thoughts were employed on some future means of supporting them ; and at last a small cure of fifteen pounds a year was offered me in a distant neighbourhood, where I could still enjoy my principles without molestation. With this proposal I joyfully closed, having determined to increase my salary by managing a little farm.

Having taken this resolution, my next care

was to get together the wrecks 'of my fortune; and all debts collected and paid, out of fourteen thousand pounds we had now but four hundred remaining. My chief attention therefore was next to bring down the pride of my family to their circumstances; for I well knew, that aspiring beggary is wretchedness itself. " You can't be ignorant, my children," cried I, " that no prudence of ours could have prevented our late misfortune; but prudence may do much in disappointing its effects. We are now poor, my fondlings, and wisdom bids us conform to our humble situation. Let us then, without repining, give up those splendours with which numbers are wretched, and seek in humbler circumstances that peace with which all may be happy. The poor live pleasantly without our help, and we are not so imperfectly formed as to be incapable of living without theirs. No, my children, let us from this moment give up all pretensions to gentility; we have still enough left for happiness, if we are wise, and let us draw upon Content for the deficiencies of fortune".

As my eldest son was bred a scholar, I determined to send him to town, where his abilities might contribute to our support and his own. The separation of friends and families is, perhaps, one of the most distressful circumstances attendant on penury. The

day soon arrived on which we were to disperse for the first time. My son, after taking leave of his mother and the rest, who mingled their tears with kisses, came to ask a blessing from me. This I gave him from my heart; and which, added to five guineas, was all the patrimony I had now to bestow. " You are going, my boy," cried I, " to London on foot in the manner Hooker, your great ancestor, travelled there before you. Take from me the same horse that was given him by the good bishop Jewel, this staff, and this book too, it will be your comfort on the way: these two lines in it are worth a million, *I have been young, and now am old; yet never saw I the righteous man forsaken, or his seed begging their bread.* Let this be your consolation as you travel on. Go, my boy, whatever be thy fortune let me see thee once a year; still keep a good heart, and farewell". As he was possest of integrity and honour, I was under no apprehensions from throwing him naked into the amphitheatre of life; for I knew he would act a good part whether he rose or fell.

His departure only prepared the way for our own, which arrived a few days afterwards. The leaving a neighbourhood in which we had enjoyed so many hours of tranquillity, was not without a tear, which scarce fortitude itself could suppress. Besides, a journey of seventy miles to a family that had hith-

erto never been above ten from home, filled us with apprehension, and the cries of the poor, who followed us for some miles contributed to increase it. The first day's journey brought us in safety within thirty miles of our future retreat, and we put up for the night at an obscure inn in a village by the way. When we were shewn a room, I desired the landlord in my usual way, to let us have his company, with which he complied, as what he drank would increase the bill next morning. He knew, however, the whole neighbourhood to which I was removing, particularly 'Squire Thornhill, who was to be my landlord, and who lived within a few miles of the place. This gentleman he described as one who desired to know little more of the world than the pleasures it afforded, being particularly remarkable for his attachment to the fair sex. He observed that no virtue was able to resist his arts and affi-
duity, and that scarce a farmer's daughter within ten miles round but what had found him successful and faithless. Tho' this account gave me some pain, it had a very different effect upon my daughters, whose features seemed to brighten with the expectation of an approaching triumph, nor was my wife less pleased and confident of their allurements and virtue. While our thoughts were thus employed, the hostess entered the room to inform her husband, that the strange gentleman, who had

been two days in the house, wanted money, and could not satisfy them for his reckoning. « Want money ! » replied the host, « that must be impossible ; for it was no later than yesterday he paid three guineas to our beadle to spare an old broken soldier that was to be whipped through the town for dog-stealing. » The hostess, however, still persisting in her first assertion, he was preparing to leave the room, swearing that he would be satisfied one way or another, when I begged the landlord would introduce me to a stranger of so much charity as he described. With this he complied, shewing in a gentleman who seemed to be about thirty, drest in clothes that once were laced. His person was well formed, though his face was marked with the lines of thinking. He had something short and dry in his address, and seemed not to understand ceremony, or to despise it. Upon the landlord's leaving the room, I could not avoid expressing my concern to the stranger at seeing a gentleman in such circumstances, and offered him my purse to satisfy the present demand. « I take it with all my heart, Sir, » replied he « and am glad that a late oversight in giving what money I had about me, has shewn me there is still some benevolence left among us. I must, however, previously intreat being informed of the name and residence of my benefactor, in order to remit it as soon as possible ». In this I

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satisfied him fully, not only mentioning my name and late misfortunes, but the place to which I was going to remove. « This, » cried he, « happens still more luckily than I hoped for, as I am going the same way myself, having been detained here two days by the floods, which, I hope, by to-morrow will be found passable ». I testified the pleasure I should have in his company, and my wife and daughters joining in entreaty, he was prevailed upon to stay to supper. The stranger's conversation, which was at once pleasing and instructive, induced me to wish for a continuance of it; but it was now high time to retire and take refreshment against the fatigues of the following day.

The next morning we all set forward together: my family on horseback, while Mr Burchell, our new companion, walked along the foot-path by the road-side, observing, with a smile, that as we were ill mounted, he would be too generous to attempt leaving us behind. As the floods were not yet subsided, we were obliged to hire a guide, who trotted on before, Mr Burchell and I bringing up the rear. We lightened the fatigues of the road with philosophical disputes, which he seemed perfectly to understand. But what surprised me most was, that though he was a money-borrower, yet he defended his opinions with as much obstinacy as if he had been my patron.

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patron. He now and then also informed me to whom the different seats belonged that lay in our view as we travelled the road. "That," cried he, pointing to a very magnificent house which stood at some distance, "belongs to Mr Thornhill, a young gentleman who enjoys a large fortune, though entirely dependent on the will of his uncle, Sir William Thornhill, a gentleman, who content with a little himself, permits his nephew to enjoy the rest, and chiefly resides in town." "What!" cried I, "is my young landlord then the nephew of a man whose virtues, generosity, and singularities are so universally known? I have heard Sir William Thornhill represented as one of the most generous, yet whimsical, men in the kingdom; a man of consummate benevolence"—"Something, perhaps, too much so," replied Mr Burchell, at least he carried benevolence to an excess when young; for his passions were then strong, and as they all were upon the side of virtue, they led it up to a romantic extreme. He early began to aim at the qualifications of the soldier and scholar; was soon distinguished in the army and had some reputation among men of learning. Adulation ever follows the ambitious; for such alone receive most pleasure from flattery. He was surround-

ed with crowds, who shewed him only one side of their character; so that he began to lose a regard for private interest in universal sympathy. He loved all mankind; for fortune prevented him from knowing that there were rascals. Physicians tell us of a disorder in which the whole body is so exquisitely sensible, that the slightest touch gives pain: what some have thus suffered in their persons, this gentleman felt in his mind. The slightest distress, whether real or fictitious, touched him to the quick, and his soul laboured under a sickly sensibility of the miseries of others, Thus disposed to relieve, it will be easily conjectured, he found numbers disposed to solicit: his profusions began to impair his fortune, but not his good-nature, that, indeed, was seen to increase as the other seemed to decay: he grew improvident as he grew poor; and though he talked like a man of sense, his actions were those of a fool. Still, however, being surrounded with importunity, and no longer able to satisfy every request that was made him, instead of money he gave promises. They were all he had to bestow, and he had not resolution enough to give any man pain by a denial. By this means he drew round him crowds of dependents, whom he was sure to disappoint; yet wished to relieve

These hung upon him for a time, and left him with merited reproaches and contempt. But in proportion as he became contemptible to others, he became despisable to himself. His mind had leaned upon their adulation, and that support taken away, he could find no pleasure in the applause of his heart, which he had never learnt to reverence itself. The world now began to wear a different aspect; the flattery of his friends began to dwindle into simple approbation, that soon took the more friendly form of advice, and advice when rejected, ever begets reproaches. He now found, that such friends as benefits had gathered round him, were by no means the most estimable: it was now found, that a man's own heart must be ever given to gain that of another. I now found, that—but I forget what I was going to observe: in short, Sir, he resolved to respect himself, and laid down a plan of restoring his shattered fortune. For this purpose, in his own whimsical manner he travelled through Europe on foot, and before he attained the age of thirty, his circumstances were more affluent than ever. At present, therefore, his bounties are more rational and moderate than before; but still he preserves the character of an humourist, and finds most pleasure in eccentric virtues».

My attention was so much taken up by Mr Burchell's account, that I scarce looked forward as we went along, till we were alarmed by the cries of my family, when turning, I perceived my youngest daughter in the midst of a rapid stream, thrown from her horse, and struggling with the torrent. She had sunk twice, nor was it in my power to disengage myself in time to bring her relief. My sensations were even too violent to permit my attempting her rescue: she would have certainly perished, had not my companion, perceiving her danger, instantly plunged into her relief, and, with some difficulty, brought her in safety to the opposite shore. By taking the current a little farther up, the rest of the family got safely over; where we had an opportunity of joining our acknowledgments to her's. Her gratitude may be more readily imagined than described: she thanked her deliverer more with looks than words, and continued to lean upon his arm, as if still willing to receive assistance. My wife also hoped one day to have the pleasure of returning his kindness at her own house. Thus, after we were all refreshed at the next inn, and had dined together, as he was going to a different part of the country, he took leave; and we pursued our journey. My wife observing as we went, that she liked Mr Burchell extremely, and protest-

ing, that if he had birth and fortune to entitle him to match into such a family as ours, she knew no man she would sooner fix upon. I could not but smile to hear her talk in this strain: one almost at the verge of beggary, thus to assume language of the most insulting affluence, might excite the ridicule of ill-nature; but I was never much displeased with those innocent delusions that tend to make us more happy.

C H A P. I V.

A proof that even the humblest fortune may grant happiness and delight which depend not on circumstance, but constitution.

THE place of our new retreat was in a little neighbourhood, consisting of farmers who tilled their own grounds, and were equal strangers to opulence and poverty. As they had almost all the conveniences of life within themselves, they seldom visited towns or cities in search of superfluity. Remote from the polite, they still retained primæval simplicity of manners, and frugality by long habit, scarce knew that temperance was a virtue. They wrought with cheerfulness on days of labour; but observed festivals as intervals of idleness and plea-

sure. They kept up the Christmas carol, sent true love-knots on Valentine morning, eat pancakes on Shrovetide, shewed their wit on the first of April, and religiously cracked nuts on Michaelmas eve. Being apprized of our approach, the whole neighbourhood came out to meet their minister, drest in their finest clothes, and preceded by a pipe and tabor: also a feast was provided for our reception, at which we sat chearfully down; and what the conversation wanted in wit, we made up in laughter.

Our little habitation was situated at the foot of a sloping hill, sheltered with a beautiful underwood behind, and a Prattling river before; on one side a meadow, on the other a green. My farm consisted of about twenty acres of excellent land, having given an hundred pounds for my predecessor's good-will. Nothing could exceed the neatness of my little inclosures: the elms and hedge-rows appearing with inexpressible beauty. My house consisted of but one story, and was covered with thatch, which gave it an air of great snugness; the walls on the inside were nicely white-washed, and my daughters undertook to adorn them with pictures of their own designing. Though the same room served us for parlour and kitchen, that only made it the warmer. Besides, as it was kept with the

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utmost neatness, the dishes, plates, and coppers, being well scoured, and all disposed in bright rows on the shelves, the eye was agreeably relieved, and did not seem to want rich furniture. There were three other apartments, one for my wife and me, another for our two daughters, within our own, and the third, with two beds, for the rest of my children.

The little republic to which I gave laws, was regulated in the following manner: By sun-rise we all assembled in our common apartment; the fire being previously kindled by the servant. After we had saluted each other with proper ceremony, (for I always thought fit to keep up some mechanical forms of good breeding, without which freedom ever destroys friendship), we all bent in gratitude to that being who gave us another day. This duty being performed, my son and I went to pursue our usual industry abroad, while my wife and daughters employed themselves in providing breakfast, which was always ready at a certain time. I allowed half an hour for this meal, and an hour for dinner; which time was taken up in innocent mirth between my wife and daughters, and in philosophical arguments between my son and me.

As we rose with the sun, so we never pursued our labours after it was gone down, but returned home to the expecting family,

where smiling looks, a neat hearth, and pleasant fire, were prepared for our reception. Nor were we without other guests: sometimes farmer Flamborough, our talkative neighbour, and often the blind piper, would pay us a visit, and taste our gooseberry wine; for the making of which we had lost neither the receipt nor the reputation. These harmless people had several ways of being good company, while one played the pipes, another would sing some soothing ballad, Johnny Armstrong's last good night, or the cruelty of Barbara Allen. The night was concluded in the manner we began the morning, my youngest boys being appointed to read the lessons of the day, and he that read loudest, distinctest, and best, was to have an halfpenny on Sunday to put in the poor's box.

When Sunday came, it was indeed a day of finery, which all my sumptuary edicts could not restrain. How well soever I fancied my lectures against pride had conquered the vanity of my daughters; yet I still found them secretly attached to all their former finery: they still loved laces, ribbands, bugles and catgut; my wife herself retained a passion for her crimson paduafoy, because I formerly happened to say it became her.

The first Sunday in particular their behaviour served to mortify me: I had desired

my girls the preceding night to be drest early the next day; for I always loved to be at church a good while before the rest of the congregation. They punctually obeyed my directions; but when we were to assemble in the morning at breakfast, down came my wife and daughters, drest out in all their former splendour: their hair plaistered up with pomatum, their faces patched to taste, their trains bundled up into an heap behind, and rustling at every motion. I could not help smiling at their vanity; particularly that of my wife, from whom I expected more discretion. In this exigence, therefore, my only resource was to order my son, with an important air, to call our coach. The girls were amazed at the command; but I repeated it with more solemnity than before.—“Surely, my dear, you jest,” cried my wife, “we can walk it perfectly well: we want no coach to carry us now.” “You mistake, child,” returned I, “we do want a coach; for if we walk to church in this trim, the very children in the parish will hoot after us for a show.”—“Indeed,” replied my wife, “I always imagined that my Charles was fond of seeing his children neat and handsome about him.”—“You may be as neat as you please,” interrupted I, “and I shall love you the better for it; but all this is not neatness, but frippery;

» These rufflings, and pinkings, and patch-
» ings, will only make us hated by all the
» wives of all our neighbours. No, my
» children, » continued I, more gravely,
» those gowns may be altered into some-
» thing of a plainer cut; for finery is very
» umbecoming in us, who want the means
» of decency. I don't know whether such
» flouncing and shredding is becoming even
» in the rich, if we consider, upon a mo-
» derate calculation, that the nakedness of
» the indigent world may be cloathed from
» the trimmings of the vain ».

This remonstrance had the proper effect; they went with great composure, that very instant, to change their dress; and the next day I had the satisfaction of finding my daughters, at their own request, employed in cutting up their trains into Sunday waist-coats for Dick and Bill, the two little ones, and what was still more satisfactory, the gowns seemed improved by being thus curtailed.

C H A P. V.

A new and great acquaintance introduced.

What we place most hopes upon, generally proves most fatal.

At a small distance from the house my predecessor had made a seat, overshadowed

by an hedge of hawthorn and honey-suckle. Here, when the weather was fine, and our labour soon finished, we usually all sat together, to enjoy an extensive landscape, in the calm of the evening. Here too we drank tea, which now was become an occasional banquet; and as we had it but seldom, it diffused a new joy, the preparations for it being made with no small share of bustle and ceremony. On these occasions, our two little ones always read for us, and they were regularly served after we had done. Sometimes, to give a variety to our amusements, the girls sung to the guitar; and while they thus formed a little concert, my wife and I would stroll down the sloping field, that was embellished with blue bells and centaury, talk of our children with rapture, and enjoy the breeze that wasted both health and harmony.

In this manner we began to find that every situation in life might bring its own peculiar pleasures: every morning waked us to a repetition of toil; but the evening repaid it with vacant hilarity.

It was about the beginning of autumn, on a holiday, for I kept such as intervals of relaxation from labour, that I had drawn out my family to our usual place of amusement, and our young musicians began their usual concert. As we were thus engaged, we saw a stag bound nimbly by,

about twenty paces of where we were sitting, and by its panting, it seemed prest by the hunters. We had not much time to reflect upon the poor animal's distress, when we perceived the dogs and horsemen come sweeping along at some distance behind, and making the very path it had taken. I was instantly for returning in with my family; but either curiosity or surprize, or some more hidden motive, held my wife and daughters to their seats. The huntsman, who rode foremost, past us with great swiftness, followed by four or five persons more, who seemed in equal haste. At last, a young gentleman of a more genteel appearance than the rest, came forward, and for a while regarding us, instead of pursuing the chase, stopt short, and giving his horse to a servant who attended, approached us with a careless superior air. He seemed to want no introduction, but was going to salute my daughters as one certain of a kind reception; but they had early learnt the lesson of looking Presumption out of countenance. Upon which he let us know, that his name was Thornhill, and that he was owner of the estate that lay for some extent round us. He again, therefore, offered to salute the female part of the family, and such was the power of fortune and fine clothes, that he found no second repulse. As his address,

confident, was easy, we soon became more familiar ; and perceiving musical instruments lying near, he begged to be favoured with a song. As I did not approve of such disproportioned acquaintances, I winked upon my daughters in order to prevent their compliance ; but my hint was counteracted by one from their mother ; so that with a chearful air they gave us a favourite song of Dryden's. Mr Thornhill seemed highly delighted with their performance and choice, and then took up the guitar himself. He played but very indifferently ; however, my eldest daughter repaid his former applause with interest, and assured him that his tones were louder than even those of her master. At this compliment he bowed, which she returned with a curtesy. He praised her taste, and she commended his understanding : an age could not have made them better acquainted. While the fond mother too, equally happy, insisted upon her landlord's stepping in, and tasting a glas of her gooseberry. The whole family seemed earnest to please him : my girls attempted to entertain him with topics they thought most modern, while Moses, on the contrary, gave him a question or two from the ancients, for which he had the satisfaction of being laughed at ; for he always ascribed to his wit that laughter which was lavish'd at his simplicity : my little ones were no

less busy, and fondly struck close to the stranger. All my endeavours could scarce keep their dirty fingers from handling and tarnishing the lace on his clothes, and lifting up the flaps of his pocket holes, to see what was there. At the approach of evening he took leave; but not till he had requested permission to renew his visit, which, as he was our landlord, we most readily agreed to.

As soon as he was gone, my wife called a council on the conduct of the day. She was of opinion, that it was a most fortunate hit; for that she had known even stranger things at last brought to bear. She hoped again to see the day in which we might hold up our heads with the best of them; and concluded, she protested she could see no reason why the two Miss Wrinklers should marry great fortunes, and her children get none. As this last argument was directed to me, I protested I could see no reason for it neither, nor why one got the ten thousand pound prize in the lottery, and another sat down with a blank.
"But those", added I, "who either aim at husbands greater than themselves, or at the ten thousand pound prize, have been fools for their ridiculous claims, whether successful or not". "I protest, Charles", cried my wife, "this is the way you always damp my girls and me when we are in

» spirits. Tell me, Sophy, my dear, what
» do you think of our new visitor? Don't
» you think he seemed to be good-natured? »

— “ Immensely so, indeed, Mamma, ” re-
plied she. “ I think he has a great deal
to say upon every thing, and is never at
a loss; and the more trifling the subject,
the more he has to say; and what is
more, I protest he is very handsome ”.—

“ Yes ”, cried Olivia, “ he is well enough
for a man; but, for my part, I don't
much like him, he is so extremely impu-
dent and familiar; but on the guitar he is
shocking ”. These two last speeches I in-
terpreted by contraries. I found by this,
that Sophia internally despised, as much
as Olivia secretly admired him.—

“ Whatever may be your opinions of him,
my children ”, cried I, “ to confess a truth,
he has not prepossest me in his favour.
Disproportioned friendships ever termi-
nate in disgust; and I thought, notwith-
standing all his ease, that he seemed per-
fectly sensible of the distance between us.
Let us keep to companions of our own
rank. There is no character among men
more contemptible than that of a fortune-
hunter, and I can see no reason why
fortune-hunting women should not be
contemptible too. Thus, at best, it will
be contempt if his views are honourable;
but if they are otherwise! I should shud-

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» der but to think of that ; for though I
» have no apprehensions from the conduct
» of my children, I think there are some
» from his character ». — I would have
proceeded, but for the interruption of a
servant from the 'Squire, who, with his
compliments, sent us a side of venison, and
a promise to dine with us some days after.
This well-timed present pleaded more power-
fully in his favour than any thing I had to
say could obviate. I therefore continued
silent, satisfied with just having pointed out
danger, and leaving it to their own discre-
tion to avoid it. That virtue which re-
quires to be ever guarded, is scarce worth
the sentinel.

C H A P. V I.

The happiness of a country fire-side.

As we carried on the former dispute
with some degree of warmth, in order
to accommodate matters, it was univer-
sally concluded upon, that we should have
a part of the venison for supper, and the
girls undertook the task with alacrity. « I
» am sorry, » cried I, « that we have no
» neighbour or stranger to take a part in
» this good cheer : feasts of this kind ac-
» quire a double relish from hospitality ». —
» Bless me, » cried my wife, « here comes

» our good friend Mr Burchell, that saved
» our Sophia, and that run you down fairly
» in the argument ».—“ Confute me in
» argument child ! ” cried I. “ You mis-
» take there, my dear. I believe there are
» but few that can do that : I never dispute
» your abilities at making a goose-pye, and
» I beg you'll leave argument to me ”.—
As I spoke, poor Mr Burchell entered the
house, and was welcomed by the family,
who shook him heartily by the hand, while
little Dick officiously reached him a chair.

I was pleased with the poor man's friend-
ship for two reasons ; because I knew he
wanted mine, and I knew him to be friendly
as far as he was able. He was known in
our neighbourhood by the character of the
poor Gentleman that would do no good
when he was young, though he was not yet
above thirty. He would at intervals talk
with great good sense; but in general he
was fondest of the company of children,
whom he used to call harmless little men.
He was famous, I found, for singing them
ballads, and telling them stories; and sel-
dom went without something in his pockets
for them, a piece of ginger-bread or a half-
penny whistle. He generally came into our
neighbourhood once a year, and lived
upon the neighbours hospitality. He sat
down to supper among us, and my wife was
not sparing of her gooseberry wine. The

tale went round; he sung us old songs, and gave the children the story of the Buck of Beverland, with the history of Patient Griffel. The adventures of Catsking next entertained them, and then Fair Rosamond's bower. Our cock, which always crew at eleven, now told us it was time for repose; but an unforeseen difficulty started about lodging the stranger: all our beds were already taken up, and it was too late to send him to the next alehouse. In this dilemma, little Dick offered him his part of the bed, if his brother Moses would let him lye with him; "And I," cried Bill, "will give Mr Bur-
" chell my part, if my sisters will take me to
" theirs".—"Well done, my good child-
" ren," cried I, "hospitality is one of the
" first christian duties. The beast retires to
" its shelter, and the bird flies to its nest; but
" helpless man can only find refuge from his
" fellow-creature. The greatest stranger in
" this world, was he that came to save it. He
" never had an house, as if willing to see
" what hospitality was left remaining a-
" mongst us. Deborah, my dear," cried I to
" my wife, give those boys a lump of sugar
" each, and let Dick's be the largest, because
" he spoke first".

In the morning early I called out my whole family to help at saving an after-growth of hay, and our guest offering his assistance, he was accepted among the num-

ber. Our labours went on lightly , we turned the swath to the wind , I went foremost , and the rest followed in due succession. I could not avoid , however , observing the assiduity of Mr Burchell in assisting my daughter Sophia in her part of the task. When he had finished his own , he would join in hers , and enter into a close conversation : but I had too good an opinion of Sophia's understanding , and was too well convinced of her ambition , to be under any uneasiness from a man of broken fortune. When we were finished for the day , Mr Burchell was invited as on the night before ; but he refused , as he was to lie that night at a neighbour's , to whose child he was carrying a whistle. When gone , our conversation at supper turned upon our late unfortunate guest . " What " a strong instance " , said I , " is that poor " man , of the miseries attending a youth of " levity and extravagance. He by no means " wants sense , which only serves to aggra- " vate his former folly. Poor forlorn crea- " ture ! where are now the revellers , the " flatterers , that he could once inspire and " command ! Gone , perhaps , to attend the " bagnio pander , grown rich by his extra- " vagance. They once praised him , and now " they applaud the pander : their former " raptures at his wit , are now converted " into sarcasms at his folly : he is poor ,

» and perhaps deserves poverty ; for he has
» neither the ambition to be independent ,
» nor the skill to be useful ». Prompted ,
perhaps , by some secret reasons , I deli-
vered this observation with too much a-
cronymy , which my Sophia gently re-
proved . « Whatever his former con-
duct may be , Papa , his circumstances
» should exempt him from censure now.
» His present indigence is a sufficient pu-
nishment for former folly ; and I have
» heard my Papa himself say , that we should
» never strike our unnecessary blow at a
» victim over whom Providence already
» holds the scourge of its resentment » . —
« You are right , Sophy » , cried my son ,
» Moses , and one of the ancients , finely re-
presents so malicious a conduct , by the
» attempts of a rustic to flay Marsyas ,
» whose skin , the fable tells us , had been
» wholly stript off by another . Besides ,
» I don't know if this poor man's situation
» be so bad as my father would represent it .
» We are not to judge of the feelings of
» others by what we might feel if in their
» place . However dark the habitation of
» the mole to our eyes , yet the animal it-
» self finds the apartment sufficiently light-
» some . And , to confess a truth , this man's
» mind seems fitted to his station ; for I ne-
» ver heard any one more sprightly than
» he was to-day , when he conversed with

“you.”—This was said without the least design, however it excited a blush, which she strove to cover by an affected laugh, assuring him, that she scarce took any notice of what he said to her; but that she believed he might once have been a very fine gentleman. The readiness with which she undertook to vindicate herself, and her blushing, were symptoms I did not internally approve; but I repress my suspicions.

As we expected our landlord the next day, my wife went to make the venison pasty; Moses sat reading, while I taught the little ones: my daughters seemed equally busy with the rest; and I observed them for a good while cooking something over the fire. I at first supposed they were assisting their mother; but little Dick informed me in a whisper, that they were making a *wash* for the face. Washes of all kinds I had a natural antipathy to; for I knew, that instead of mending the complexion, they spoiled it. I therefore approached my chair by slow degrees to the fire, and grasping the poker, as if it wanted mending, seemingly by accident, overturned the whole composition, and it was too late to begin another.

C H A P. V I L.

A Town Wit described. The dullest fellows may learn to be comical for a night or two.

WHEN the morning arrived on which we were to entertain our young landlord, it may be easily supposed what provisions were exhausted to make an appearance. It may also be conjectured, that my wife and daughters expended their gayest plumage upon this occasion. Mr. Thornhill came with a couple of friends, his chaplain and feeder. The servants, who were numerous, he politely ordered to the next ale-house; but my wife, in the triumph of her heart, insisted on entertaining them all; for which by the bye, the family was pinched for three weeks after. As Mr. Burchell had hinted to us the day before, that he was making some proposals of marriage to Miss Wilmot, my son George's former mistress, this a good deal damped the heartiness of his reception: but accident, in some measure relieved our embarrassment; for one of the company happening to mention her name, Mr. Thornhill observed with an oath, that he never knew any thing more absurd than calling such a fright a beauty: « For strike

» me ugly », continued he, « if I should not
» find as much pleasure in choosing my mis-
» tress by the information of a lamp under
» the clock at St Dunstan's ». At this he
laughed, and so did we:—the jests of the
rich are ever successful. Olivia too could
not avoid whispering, loud enough to be
heard, that he had an infinite fund of hu-
mour.

After dinner I began with my usual toast, the Church; for this I was thanked by the chaplain, as he said the church was the only mistress of his affections.—« Come tell us honestly, Frank », said the 'Squire, with his usual archness, « suppose the church, your present mistress, drest in lawn sleeves, on one hand, and Miss Sophia, with no lawn about her, on the other, which would you be for? » « For both to be sure », cried the chaplain.—« Right, Frank », cried the 'Squire; « for may this glass suffocate me but a fine girl is worth all the priesthood in the nation. For what are tythes and tricks but an imposition; all a confounded imposture, and I can prove it ».—« I wish you would », cried my son Moses, « and I think », continued he, « that I should be able to combat in the opposition ».—« Very well, Sir, cried the 'Squire, who immediately smoaked him, and winking on the rest of the company, to prepare us for

the sport, « if you are for a cool argument » upon that subject, I am ready to accept « the challenge. And first, whether are « you for managing it analogically, or di- « alogically »? « I am for managing it ra- « tionally », cried Moses, quite happy at being permitted to dispute. « Good a- « gain », cried the 'Squire, « and firstly, « of the first, I hope you'll not deny, that « whatever is, is. If you don't grant me « that, I can go no further ».—Why », returned Moses, « I think I may grant « that, and make the best of it ».— « I hope too », returned the other, « you'll « grant that a part is less than the whole ». « I grant that too », cried Moses, « it is « but just and reasonable ».—« I hope », cried the 'Squire, you will not deny, « that « the two angles of a triangle are equal to « two right ones ».—« Nothing can be « plainer », returned t'other, and looked round with his usual importance.— « Very well », cried the 'Squire speaking very quick, « the premises being thus set- « tled, I proceed to observe, that the con- « catenation of self-existences, proceeding « in a reciprocal duplicate ratio, naturally « produce a problematical dialogism, which « in some measure proves that the essence « of spirituality may be referred to the se- « cond predicate »—« Hold, hold », cri- ed the other, « I deny that : Do you think

"I can thus tamely submit to such heterodox doctrines?" — "What?", replied the 'Squire, as if in a passion, "not submit! Answer me one plain question: Do you think Aristotle right when he says, 'that relatives are related'? "Undoubtedly", replied the other. — "If so then", cried the 'Squire, "answer me directly to what I propose: Whether do you judge the analytical investigation of the first part of my enthymem deficient secundum quoad, or quoad minus, and give me your reasons too: give me your reasons, I say, directly", — "I protest", cried Moses, I don't rightly comprehend the force of your reasoning; but if it be reduced to one simple proposition, I fancy it may then have an answer", — "O, Sir", cried the 'Squire, "I am your most humble servant, I find you want me to furnish you with arguments and intellects both. No, Sir, there I protest you are too hard for me". This effectually raised the laugh against poor Moses, who sat the only dismal figure in a groupe of merry faces: nor did he offer a single syllable more during the whole entertainment.

But though all this gave me no pleasure, it had a very different effect upon Olivia, who mistook this humour, which was a mere act of the memory for real wit. She thought him therefore a very fine gentle-

man ; and such as consider what powerful ingredients a good figure , fine clothes , and fortune , are in that Character , will easily forgive her . Mr. Thornhill , notwithstanding his real ignorance , talked with ease , and could expatiate upon the common topics of conversation with fluency . It is not surprising then that such talents should win the affections of a girl , who by education was taught to value an appearance in herself , and consequently to set a value upon it when found in another .

Upon his departure , we again entered into a debate upon the merits of our young landlord . As he directed his looks and conversation to Olivia , it was no longer doubted but that she was the object that induced him to be our visitor . Nor did she seem to be much displeased at the innocent raillery of her brother and sister upon this occasion . Even Deborah herself seemed to share the glory of the day , and exulted in her daughter's victory as if it were her own . « And now , my dear » , cried she to me , « I'll fairly own , that it was I that instructed my girls to encourage our landlord's addresses . I had always some ambition , and you now see that I was right ; for who knows how this may end » ? « Ay , who knows that indeed » ? answered I , with a groan ; « for my own part I don't much like it ; and I could have been better plea-

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» sed with one that was poor and honest,
» than this fine gentleman with his for-
» tune and infidelity ; for depend on't;
» if he be what I suspect him, no free-
» thinker shall ever have a child of mine.

» Sure, father », cried Moses, « you are
» too severe in this ; for Heaven will never
» arraign him for what he thinks, but for
» what he does. Every man has a thou-
» sand vicious thoughts, which arise with-
» out his power to suppress. Thinking
» freely of religion, may be involuntary
» with this gentleman : so that allowing
» his sentiments to be wrong, yet as he is
» purely passive in their reception, he is no
» more to be blamed for their incursions,
» than the governor of a city without walls
» for the shelter he is obliged to afford an
» invading enemy ».

» True, my son », cried I ; « but if the
» governor invites the enemy, there he is
» justly culpable. And such is always the
» case with those who embrace error. The
» vice does not lye in assenting to the proofs
» they see ; but in being blind to many of
» the proofs that offer. Like corrupt judg-
» es on a bench, they determine right on
» that part of the evidence they hear ; but
» they will not hear all the evidence. Thus,
» my son, though our erroneous opinions
» be involuntary when formed, yet as we
» have been wilfully corrupt, or very ne-

» gligent in forming them, we deserve pi-
» nishment for our vice, or contempt for
» our folly ».

My wife now kept up the conversation, though not the argument : she observed, that several very prudent men of our acquaintance were free-thinkers, and made very good husbands ; and she knew some sensible girls that had skill enough to make converts of their spouses : « And who knows, » my dear », continued she, « what Olivia may be able to do ? The girl has a great deal to say upon every subject, and to my knowledge is very well skilled in controversy ».

» Why, my dear, what controversy can she have read ? » cried I. « It does not occur to my memory that I ever put such books into her hands : you certainly over-rate her merit ». « Indeed, Papa », replied Olivia, « she does not : I have read a great deal of controversy. I have read the disputes between Thwackum and Square ; the controversy between Robinson Crusoe and Friday the savage, and I am now employed in reading the controversy in Religious courtship ». — « Very well », cried I, « that's a good girl, I find you are perfectly qualified for making converts, and so go help your mother to make the gooseberry-pye ».

C H A P. V I I I.

An amour, which promises little good fortune, yet may be productive of much.

THE next morning we were again visited by Mr Burchell, though I began, for certain reasons, to be displeased with the frequency of his return; but I could not refuse him my company and fire-side. It is true his labour more than requited his entertainment; for he wrought among us with vigour, and either in the meadow or at the hay-rick put himself foremost. Besides, he had always something amusing to say that lessened our toil, and was at once so out of the way, and yet so sensible, that I loved, laughed at, and pitied him. My only dislike arose from an attachment he discovered to my daughter: he would, in a jesting manner, call her his little mistress, and when he bought each of the girls a set of ribbands, hers was the finest. I knew not how, but he every day seemed to become more amiable, his wit to improve, and his simplicity to assume the superior airs of wisdom.

Our family dined in the field, and we sat, or rather reclined, round a temperate repast, our cloth spread upon the hay, while

Mr Burchell seemed to give cheerfulness to the feast. To heighten our satisfaction, two blackbirds answered each other from opposite hedges, the familiar red-breast came and picked the crumbs from our hands, and every sound seemed but the echo of tranquillity. "I never sit thus", says Sophia, "but I think of the two lovers, so sweetly described by Mr Gay, who were struck dead in each other's arms under a barley mow. There is something so pathetic in the description, that I have read it an hundred times with new rapture".— "In my opinion", cried my son, "the finest strokes in that description are much below those in the Acis and Galatea of Ovid. The Roman poet understands the use of contrast better, and upon that figure artfully managed, all strength in the pathetic depends".— "It is remarkable", cried Mr Burchell, "that both the poets you mention have equally contributed to introduce a false taste into their respective countries, by loading all their lines with epithet. Men of little genius found them most easily imitated in their defects, and English poetry, like that in the latter empire of Rome, is nothing at present but a combination of luxuriant images, without plot or connection; a string of epithets that improve the sound, without carrying on the sense. But, perhaps,

» Madam, while I thus reprehend others,
 » you'll think it just that I should give them
 » an opportunity to retaliate, and indeed I
 » have made this remark only to have an
 » opportunity of introducing to the com-
 » pany a ballad, which, whatever be its
 » other defects, is, I think, at least free
 » from those I have mentioned ».

A BALLAD.

TURN, gentle hermit of the dale,
 » And guide my lonely way,
 » To where yon taper cheers the vale
 » With hospitable ray.

» For here forlorn and lost I tread,
 » With fainting steps, and slow ;
 » Where wilds immeasurably spread,
 » Seem lengthening as I go ».

» Forbear, my son », the hermit cries,
 » To tempt the dangerous gloom ;
 » For yonder phantom only flies
 » To lure thee to thy doom.

» Here to the houseless child of Want,
 » My door is open still ;
 » And tho' my portion is but scant,
 » I give it with good will.

» Then turn to-night and freely share
 » Whate'er my cell bestows ;

» My rushy couch, and frugal fare,
» My blessing and repose.

» No flocks that range the valley free,
» To slaughter I condemn :
» Taught by that pow'r that pities me,
» I learn to pity them.

» But from the mountain's grassy side,
» A guiltless feast I bring ;
» A scrip with herbs and fruits supply'd,
» And water from the spring.

» Then, pilgrim, turn, thy cares forego ;
» For earth-born cares are wrong :
» Man wants but little here below,
» Nor wants that little long ».

Soft as the dew from heav'n descends,
His gentle accents fell :
The grateful stranger lowly bends,
And follows to the cell.

Far shelter'd in a glade obscure
The modest mansion lay ;
A refuge to the neighbouring poor,
And strangers led astray.

No stores beneath its humble thatch
Requir'd a master's care ;
The door, just opening with a latch,
Receiv'd the harmless pair.

And now, when worldly crowds retire
To revels or to rest,

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The hermit trimm'd his little fire,
And cheer'd his penfive guest:

And spread his vegetable store,
And gayly prest, and smil'd;
And skill'd in legendary lore,
The lingering hours beguil'd.

Around in sympathetic mirth,
Its tricks the kitten tries;
The cricket chirrups in the hearth;
The crackling faggot flies.

But nothing could a charm impart
To sooth the stranger's wo;
For grief was heavy at his heart,
And tears began to flow.

His rising cares the hermit spy'd,
With answering care opprest:
» And whence, unhappy youth », he cry'd,
» The sorrows of thy breast?
» From better habitations spurn'd,
» Reluctant dost thou rove?
» Or grieve for friendship unreturn'd,
» Or unregarded love?
» Alas ! the joys that fortune brings,
» Are trifling and decay;
» And those who prize theaultry things,
» More trifling still than they.
» And what is friendship but a name,
» A charm that lulls to sleep;

» A shade that follows wealth or fame,
 » But leaves the wretch to weep!
» And love is still an emptier sound,
 » The haughty fair one's jest:
» On earth unseen, or only found
 » To warm the turtle's nest.
» For shame, fond youth, thy sorrows hush,
 » And spurn the sex », he said :
But while he spoke, a rising blush
 The bashful guest betray'd.

He sees unnumber'd beauties rise,
 Expanding to the view;
Like clouds that deck the morning skies,
 As bright, as transient too.

Her looks, her lips, her panting breast,
 Alternate spread alarms ;
The lovely stranger stands confest
 A maid in all her charms.

And, « ah, forgive a stranger rude,
 » A wretch forlorn », she cry'd ;
» Whose feet unhallowed thus intrude
 » Where heav'n and you reside.

» But let a maid thy pity share,
 » Whom Love has taught to stray ;
» Who seeks for rest, but finds Despair
 » Companion of her way.

» My father liv'd beside the Tyne,
 » A wealthy Lord was he;

OF WAKEFIELD. 59

» And all his wealth was mark'd as mine,
» He had but only me.

» To win me from his tender arms,
» Unnumber'd suitors came;

» Who prais'd me for imputed charms,
» And felt or feign'd a flame.

» Each morn the gay phantastic crowd,
» With richest proffers strove;

» Among the rest young Edwin bow'd,
» But never talk'd of love.

» In humble simplest habit clad,
» No wealth nor power had he;

» A constant heart was all he had,
» But that was all to me.

» The blossom opening to the day,
» The dews of heav'n refin'd,

» Could nought of purity display,
» To emulate his mind.

» The dew, the blossom on the tree,
» With charms inconstant shine;

» Their charms were his, but wo to me,
» Their constancy was mine.

» For still I try'd each fickle art,
» Importunate and vain;

» And while his passion touch'd my heart,
» I triumph'd in his pain.

» 'Till quite dejected with my scorn,
» He left me to my pride;

60 THE VICAR

- » And sought a solitude forlorn,
» In secret, where he died.
- » But mine the sorrow, mine the fault,
» And well my life shall pay ;
» I'll seek the solitude he sought,
» And stretch me where he lay.
- » And there forlorn despairing hid,
» I'll lay me down and die :
» 'Twas so for me that Edwin did,
» And so for him will I ».
- » Thou shalt not thus », the hermit cry'd,
And clasp'd her to his breast:
The wondering fair one turn'd to chide,
'Twas Edwin's self that prest.
- » Turn, Angelina, ever dear,
» My charmer, turn to see ,
» Thy own, thy long-lost Edwin here,
» Restor'd to Love and thee.
- » Thus let me hold thee to my heart,
» And every care resign :
» And shall we never, never part?
» O thou—my all that's mine !
- » No, never, from this hour to part,
» We'll live and love so true ;
» The sigh that rends thy constant heart,
» Shall break thy Edwin's too ».

While this ballad was reading, Sophia seemed to mix an ear of tenderness with

her approbation. But our tranquillity was soon disturbed by the report of a gun just by us, and immediately after, a man was seen bursting through the hedge, to take up the game he had killed. This sportsman was the 'Squire's chaplain, who had shot one of the blackbirds that so agreeably entertained us. So loud a report, and so near, startled my daughters; and I could perceive that Sophia in the fright had thrown herself into Mr Burchell's arms for protection. The gentleman came up, and asked pardon for having disturbed us, affirming that he was ignorant of our being so near. He therefore sat down by my youngest daughter, and, sportsman like, offered her what he had killed that morning. She was going to refuse, but a private look from her mother soon induced her to correct the mistake, and accept his present, though with some reluctance. My wife, as usual discovered her pride in a whisper, observing, that Sophy had made a conquest of the chaplain, as well as her sister had of the 'Squire. I suspected, however, with more probability, that her affections were placed upon a different object. The chaplain's errand was to inform us, that Mr Thornhill had provided music and refreshments, and intended that night giving the young ladies a ball by moonlight, on the grass-plot before our door. « Nor can I deny », continu-

ed he, " but I have an interest in being first
" to deliver this message , as I expect for my
" reward to be honoured with miss Sophy's
" hand as a partner ". To this my girl re-
plied, that she should have no objection, if
she could do it with honour : " But here ",
continued she, " is a gentleman ", looking
at Mr Burchell, " who has been my com-
panion in the task for the day , and it is
" fit he should share in its amusements ".
Mr Burchell returned her a compliment for
her intentions ; but resigned her up to the
chaplain, adding, that he was to go that
night five miles, being invited to an harvest
supper. His refusal appeared to me a little
extraordinary , nor could I conceive how so
sensible a girl as my youngest, could thus
prefer a middle aged man of broken for-
tune to a sprightly young fellow of twenty-
two. But as men are most capable of di-
stinguishing merit in women , so the ladies
often form the truest judgments upon us.
The two sexes seem placed as spies upon
each other , and are furnished with dif-
ferent abilities, adapted for mutual inspec-
tion.

C H A P. I X.

Two ladies of great distinction introduced.

Superior finery ever seems to confer superior breeding.

MR Burchell had scarce taken leave, and Sophia consented to dance with the chaplain, when my little ones came running out to tell us that the 'Squire was come, with a crowd of company. Upon our return, we found our landlord, with a couple of under gentlemen and two young ladies richly dress'd, whom he introduced as women of very great distinction and fashion from town. We happened not to have chairs enough for the whole company; but Mr Thornhill immediately proposed, that every gentleman should sit in a lady's lap. This I positively objected to, notwithstanding a look of disapprobation from my wife. Moses was therefore dispatched to borrow a couple of chairs; and as we were in want of ladies also to make up a set at country dances, the two gentlemen went with him in quest of a couple of partners. Chairs and partners were soon provided. The gentlemen returned with my neighbour Flamborough's rosy daughters, flaunting with red top-knots. But there was an unlucky cir-

cumstance which was not adverted to ; tho' the Miss Flamboroughs were reckoned the very best dancers in the parish , and understood the jig and the round-about to perfection ; yet they were totally unacquainted with country dances. This at first discomposed us : however , after a little shoving and dragging , they began to go merrily on. Our music consisted of two fiddles , with a pipe and tabor. The moon shone bright , Mr Thornhill and my eldest daughter led up the ball , to the great delight of the spectators ; for the neighbours hearing what was going forward came flocking about us. My girl moved with so much grace and vivacity , that my wife could not avoid discovering the pride of her heart by assuring me , that though the little chit did it so cleverly , all the steps were stolen from herself. The ladies of the town strove hard to be equally easy , but without success. They swam , sprawled , languished , and frisked ; but all would not do : the ganders indeed owned that it was fine ; but neighbour Flamborough observed , that Miss Livy's feet seemed as pat to the music as its echo. After the dance had continued about an hour , the two ladies , who were apprehensive of catching cold , moved to break up the ball. One of them , I thought , expressed her sentiments upon this occasion in a very coarse manner , when she obser-

ved, that by the *living jingo*, she was all of a muck of sweat. Upon our return to the house, we found a very elegant cold supper, which Mr Thornhill had ordered to be brought with him. The conversation at this time was more reserved than before. The two ladies threw my girls quite into the shade; for they would talk of nothing but high life, and high-lived company; with other fashionable topics, such as pictures, taste, Shakespear, and the musical glasses. 'Tis true they once or twice mortified us sensibly by slipping out an oath; but that appeared to me as the surest symptom of their distinction, (tho' I am since informed swearing is now perfectly unfashionable.) Their finery, however, threw a vail over any grossness in their conversation. My daughters seemed to regard their superior accomplishments with envy; and what appeared amiss was ascribed to tip-top quality breeding. But the condescension of the ladies was still superior to their other accomplishments. One of them observed, that had Miss Olivia seen a little more of the world, it would greatly improve her. To which the other added, that a single winter in town would make her little Sophia quite another thing. My wife warmly assented to both; adding, that there was nothing she more ardently wished than to give her girls a single winter's polishing. To this I could

not help replying, that their breeding was already superior to their fortune; and that greater refinement would only serve to make their poverty ridiculous, and give them a taste for pleasures they had no right to possess.—“ And what pleasures ”, cried Mr Thornhill, “ do they not deserve, who have so much in their power to bestow? ” As for my part ”, continued he, “ my fortune is pretty large : love, liberty, and pleasure, are my maxims; but curse me if a settlement of half my estate could give my charming Olivia pleasure, it should be her’s; and the only favour I would ask in return would be to add myself to the benefit ”. I was not such a stranger to the world as to be ignorant that this was the fashionable cant to disguise the insolence of the basest proposal; but I made an effort to suppress my resentment. “ Sir ”, cried I, “ the family which you now descend to favour with your company, has been bred with as nice a sense of honour as you. Any attempts to injure that, may be attended with very dangerous consequences. Honour, Sir, is our only possession at present, and of that last treasure we must be particularly careful ”.— —I was soon sorry for the warmth with which I had spoken this, when the young gentleman, grasping my hand, swore he commended my spirit, though he

disapproved my suspicions. "As to your present hint", continued he, "I protest nothing was farther from my heart than such a thought. No, by all that's tempting, the virtue that will stand a regular siege was never to my taste; for all my amours are carried by a *coup de main*".

The two ladies, who affected to be ignorant of the rest, seemed highly displeased with this last stroke of freedom, and began a very discreet and serious dialogue upon virtue: in this my wife, the chaplain and I, soon joined; and the 'Squire himself was at last brought to confess a sense of sorrow for his former excesses. We talked of the pleasures of temperance, and the sun-shine in the mind unpolluted with guilt. I was well pleased that my little ones were kept up beyond the usual time to be edified by such good conversation. Mr Thornhill even went beyond me, and demanded if I had any objection to giving prayers. I joyfully embraced the proposal, and in this manner the night was passed in a most comfortable way, till at last the company began to think of returning. The ladies seemed very unwilling to part from my daughters; for whom they had conceived a particular affection, and joined in a request to have the pleasure of their company home. The 'Squire seconded the proposal, and my wife added her intreaties; the girls too

looked upon me as if they wished to go. In this perplexity I made two, or three excuses, which my daughters as readily removed; so that at last I was obliged to give a peremptory refusal; for which we had nothing but sullen looks and short answers the whole day ensuing.

C H A P. X.

The family endeavours to cope with their betters. The miseries of the poor when they attempt to appear above their circumstances.

I Now began to find, that all my long and painful lectures upon temperance, simplicity, and contentment, were entirely disregarded. The distinctions lately paid us by our betters awaked that pride which I had laid asleep, but not removed. Our windows now again, as formerly, were filled with washes for the neck and face. The sun was dreaded as an enemy to the skin without doors, and the fire as a spoiler of the complexion within. My wife observed, that rising too early would hurt her daughters eyes, that working after dinner would redder their noses, and convinced me that the hands never looked so white as when they did nothing. Instead therefore of finishing George's shirts, we now had them new mo-

delling their old gauzes, or flourishing upon catgut. The poor Miss Flamboroughs, their former gay companions, were cast off as mean acquaintance, and the whole conversation ran upon high life and high-lived company, with pictures, taste, Shakespear, and the musical glasses.

But we could have borne all this, had not a fortune-telling gipsey come to raise us into perfect sublimity. The tawny sybil no sooner appeared, than my girls came running to me for a shilling a-piece to cross her hand with silver. To say the truth, I was tired of being always wise, and could not help gratifying their request, because I loved to see them happy. I gave each of them a shilling; though for the honour of the family, it must be observed, that they never went without money themselves, as my wife always generously let them have a guinea each, to keep in their pockets; but with strict injunctions never to change it. After they had been closetted up with the fortuneteller for some time, I knew by their looks upon their returning, that they had been promised something great,—“ Well, my girls, how have you sped? Tell me, Livy, has the fortune-teller given thee a penny-worth? — “ I protest, Papa », says the girl, with a serious face, “ I believe she deals with some body that’s not right; for she positively declared, that I am to

» be married to a great 'Squire in less than
» a twelvemonth? — "Well now, Sophy,
» my child", said I, "and what sort of a
» husband are you to have"? Sir, "replied
» she, "I am to have a Lord soon after my
» sister has been married to the 'Squire".
» —— How", cried I, "is that all you are
» to have for your two shillings! Only a
» Lord and a 'Squire for two shillings!
» You fools, I could have promised you a
» Prince and Nabod for half the money".

This curiosity of theirs, however, was attended with very serious effects: we now began to think ourselves designed by the Stars for something exalted, and already anticipated our future grandeur.

It has been a thousand times observed, and I must observe it once more, that the hours we pass with happy prospects in view, are more pleasing than those crowned with fruition. In the first case, we cook the dish to our own appetite; in the latter, nature cooks it for us. It is impossible to repeat the train of agreeable reveries we call up for our entertainment. We looked upon our fortunes as once more rising; and as the whole parish asserted that the 'Squire was in love with my daughter, she was actually so with him; for they persuaded her into passion. In this agreeable interval, my wife had the most lucky dreams in the world, which she took care to tell us every morn-

ing, with great solemnity and exactness. It was one night a coffin and cross bones, the sign of an approaching wedding : at another time she imagined her daughter's pockets filled with farthings, a certain sign of their being one day stuffed with gold. The girls had their omens too : they felt strange kisses on their lips; they saw rings in the candle, purses bounced from the fire, and true-love-knots lurked at the bottom of every tea-cup.

Towards the end of the week we received a card from the town ladies ; in which, with their compliments, they hoped to see all our family at church the Sunday following. All Saturday morning I could perceive, in consequence of this, my wife and daughters in close conference together, and now and then glancing at me with looks that betrayed a latent plot. To be sincere, I had strong suspicions that some absurd proposal was preparing for appearing with splendor the next day. In the evening they began their operations in a very regular manner, and my wife undertook to conduct the siege. After tea, when I seemed in spirits, she began thus,—“I fancy, Charles, my dear, we shall have a great deal of good company at our church to-morrow.”—“Perhaps we may, my dear”, returned I; “though you need be under no uneasiness about that, you shall have a sermon whe-

» ther there be or not".—"That is what
» I expect", returned she; "but I think, my
» dear, we ought to appear there as decent-
» ly as possible, for who knows what may
» happen"? Your precautions", replied I,
» are highly commendable. A decent beha-
» viour and appearance in church is what
» charms me. We should be devout and hum-
» ble, chearful and serene".—"Yes", cried
she, "I know that; but I mean we should
» go there in as proper a manner as possible;
» not altogether like the scrubs about us".
"You are quite right, my dear", returned
I, "and I was going to make the very
» same proposal. The proper manner of
» going is, to go there as early as possible,
» to have time for meditation before the ser-
» vice begins".—"Phoo, Charles", inter-
rupted she, "all that is very true; but
» not what I would be at. I mean, we should
» go there genteely. You know the church is
» two miles off, and I protest I don't like to
» see my daughters trudging up to their pew
» all blowzed and red with walking, and
» looking for all the world as if they had
» been winners at a smock race. Now my
» dear, my proposal is this: there are our
» two plow-horses, the Colt that has been
» in our family these nine years, and his
» companion Blackberry, that have scarce
» done an earthly thing for this month
» past, and are both grown fat and lazy. Why
» should

"should not they do something as well as
"we? And, let me tell you, when Moses
"has trimmed them a little, they will not
"be so contemptible".

To this proposal I objected, that walking would be twenty times more genteel than such a poultry conveyance, as Blackberry was wall-eyed, and the Colt wanted a tail: that they had never been broke to the rein; but had an hundred vicious tricks; and that we had but one saddle and pillion in the whole house. All these objections, however, were over-ruled; so that I was obliged to comply. The next morning I perceived them not a little busy in collecting such materials as might be necessary for the expedition; but as I found it would be a business of much time, I walked on to the church before, and they promised speedily to follow. I waited near an hour in the reading desk for their arrival; but not finding them come so speedily as I expected, I was obliged to begin, and went through the service, not without some uneasiness at finding them absent. This was increased when all was finished, and no appearance of the family. I therefore walked back by the horse-way, which was five miles round, tho' the foot-way was but two; and when got about half way home, perceived the procession marching slowly forward towards the church, my son, my wife, and the two little ones

exalted upon one horse, and my two daughters upon the other. I demanded the cause of their delay; but I soon found by their looks they had met with a thousand misfortunes on the road. The horses had at first refused to move from the door, till Mr Burchell was kind enough to beat them forward for about two hundred yards with his cudgel. Next the straps of my wife's pillion broke down, and they were obliged to stop to repair them before they could proceed. After that, one of the horses took it into his head to stand still, and neither blows nor intreaties could prevail with him to proceed. It was just recovering from this dismal situation that I found them; but perceiving every thing safe, I own their present mortification did not much displease me, as it might give me many opportunities of future triumph, and teach my daughters more humility.

C H A P. X I.

The family still resolve to hold up their heads.

MICHAELMAS eve happening on the next day, we were invited to burn nuts and play tricks at neighbour Flamborough's. Our late mortifications had humbled us a little, or it is probable we might have rejected such an invitation with contempt: however, we suffered ourselves to be happy.

OF WAKEFIELD. 75

Our honest neighbour's goose and dumplings were fine, and the lamb's-wool even in the opinion of my wife, who was a connoisseur, was thought excellent. It is true, his manner of telling stories was not quite so well. They were very long, and very dull, and all about himself, and we had laughed at them ten times before: however, we were kind enough to laugh at them once more.

Mr Burchell, who was of the party, was always fond of seeing some innocent amusement going forward, and set the boys and girls to blind man's buff. My wife too was persuaded to join in the diversion, and it gave me pleasure to think she was not yet too old. In the mean time, my neighbour and I looked on, laughed at every feat, and praised our own dexterity when we were young. Hot cockles succeeded next, questions and commands followed that, and last of all, they sat down to hunt the slipper. As every person may not be acquainted with this primæval pastime, it may be necessary to observe, that the company at this play plant themselves in a ring upon the ground, all except one who stands in the middle, whose business it is to catch a shoe, which the company shove about under their hams from one to another, something like a weaver's shuttle. As it is impossible, in this case, for the lady who is up to face all the company at

once, the great beauty of the play lies in hitting her a thump with the heel of the shoe on that side least capable of making a defence. It was in this manner that my eldest daughter was hemmed in, and thumped about, all blowzed, in spirits, and bawling for fair play, fair play, with a voice that might deafen a ballad-singer, when, confusion on confusion, who should enter the room but our two great acquaintances from town, lady Blarney and Miss Carolina Wilemina Amelia Skeggs! Description would but beggar, therefore it is unnecessary to describe this new mortification. Death! To be seen by ladies of such high breeding in such vulgar attitudes! Nothing better could ensue from such a vulgar play of Mr Flamborough's proposing. We seemed struck to the ground for some time, as if actually petrified with amazement.

The two ladies had been at our house to see us; and finding us from home, came after us hither, as they were uneasy to know what accident could have kept us from church the day before. Olivia undertook to be our prolocutor, and delivered the whole in a summary way, only saying. « We were thrown from our horses ». At which account the ladies were greatly concerned; but being told the family received no hurt they were extremely glad: but being informed that we were almost killed by the

fright, they were vastly sorry; but hearing that we had a very good night, they were extremely glad again. Nothing could exceed their complaisance to my daughters; their professions the last evening were warm, but now they were ardent. They protest-ed a desire of having a more lasting acquaintance. Lady Blarney was particu-lar-ly attached to Olivia; Miss Carolina Wil-elmina Amelia Skeggs (I love to give the whole name) took a greater fancy to her sister. They supported the conversation between themselves, while my daughters sat silent, admiring their exalted breeding. But as every reader, however beggarly himself, is fond of high-lived dialogues, with anecdotes of Lords, Ladies, and Knights of the Garter, I must beg leave to give him the concluding part of the present conversation.

“ All that I know of the matter ” , cried Miss Skeggs , “ is this , that it may be true , ” or it may not be true : but this I can as-sure your Ladyship , that the whole rout was in amaze ; his Lordship turned all manner of colours , my Lady fell into a swoon ; but Sir Tomkyn , drawing his sword , swore he was her’s to the last drop of his blood .

“ Well ” , replied our Peerefs , “ this I can say , that the Dutchefs never told me a syllable of the matter , and I believe her

» grace would keep nothing a secret from
» me. But this you may depend upon as
» fact, that the next morning my Lord Duke
» cried out three times to his valet de cham-
» bre, Jernigan, Jernigan, Jernigan, bring
» me my garters ».

But previously, I should have mentioned the very impolite behaviour of Mr Burchel, who, during this discourse, sat with his face turned to the fire, and at the conclusion of every sentence would cry out *fudge*, an expression which displeased us all, and in some measure damped the rising spirit of the conversation.

« Besides, my dear Skeggs », continued our Peereſſ, there is nothing of this in the copy of verses that Dr Burdock made upon the occasion.

« I am surprized at that », cried Miss Skeggs ; « for he seldom leaves any thing out, as he writes only for his own amusement. But can your Ladyship favour me with a sight of them » ?

« My dear creature », replied our Peereſſ, « do you think I carry such things about me ? Though they are very fine, to be sure, and I think myself something of a judge ; at least I know what pleases myself. Indeed I was ever an admirer of all Doctor Burdock's little pieces ; for except what he does, and our dear Countess at Hanover-Square, there's nothing

» comes out but the most lowest stuff in nature; not a bit of high life among them».

« Your Ladyship should except», says t'other, « your own things in the Lady's Magazine. I hope you'll say there's nothing low-lived there, but I suppose we are to have no more from that quarter»?

« Why, my dear», says the Lady, « you know my reader and companion has left me, to be married to Captain Roch, and as my poor eyes won't suffer me to write myself, I have been for some time looking out for another. A proper person is no easy matter to find, and to be sure thirty pounds a-year is a small stipend for a well-bred girl of character, that can read, write, and behave in company; as for the chits about town, there is no bearing them about one».

« That I know», cried Miss Skeggs, « by experience. For of the three companies I had this last half year, one of them refused to do plain-work an hour in the day, another thought twenty-five guineas a year too small a salary, and I was obliged to send away the third, because I suspected an intrigue with the chaplain. Virtue, my dear Lady Blarney, virtue is worth any price; but where is that to be found? I—

My wife had been for a long time all attention to this discourse; but was particu-

larly struck with the latter part of it. Thirty pounds, and twenty-five guineas a-year made fifty-six pounds five shillings English money, all which was in a manner going a-begging, and might easily be secured in the family. She for a moment studied my looks for approbation; and, to own a truth, I was of opinion, that two such places would fit our two daughters exactly. Besides, if the 'Squire had any real affection for my eldest daughter, this would be the way to make her every way qualified for her fortune. My wife therefore was resolved that we should not be deprived of such advantages for want of assurance, and undertook to harangue for the family. « I » hope », cried she, « your Ladyships will » pardon my present presumption. It is true, » we have no right to pretend to such fa- » vours; but yet it is natural for me to » wish putting my children forward in the » world. And I will be bold to say my » two girls have had a pretty good educa- » tion, and capacity, at least the country » can't shew better. They can read, write, » and cast accompts; they understand their » needle, breadstitch, cross and change, » and all manner of plain work; they can » pink, point, and frill; and know some- » thing of music; they can do up small » clothes, work upon catgut; my eldest » can cut paper, and my youngest has a

» very pretty manner of telling fortunes
» upon the cards ».

When she had delivered this pretty piece of eloquence, the two ladies looked at each other a few minutes in silence, with an air of doubt and importance. At last, Miss Carolina Wilemina Amelia Skeggs condescended to observe, that the young ladies, from the opinion she could form of them from so slight an acquaintance, seemed very fit for such employments: « But a thing of this kind, Madam », cried she, addressing my spouse, « requires a thorough examination into characters, and a more perfect knowledge of each other. Not, Madam », continued she, « that I in the least suspect the young ladies virtue, prudence, and discretion; but there is a form in these things, Madam, there is a form ».

My wife approved her suspicions very much, observing, that she was very apt to be suspicious herself; but referred her to all the neighbours for a character: but this our Peeres declined as unnecessary, alledging that her cousin Thornhill's recommendation would be sufficient, and upon this we rested our petition.

CHAP. XII.

Fortune seems resolved to humble the family of Wakefield. Mortifications are often more painful than real calamities.

WHEN we were returned home , the night was dedicated to schemes of future conquest. Deborah exerted much sagacity in conjecturing which of the two girls was likely to have the best place , and most opportunities of seeing good company. The only obstacle to our preferment was in obtaining the "Squire's recommendation ; but he had already shewn us too many instances of his friendship to doubt of it now. Even in bed my wife kept up the usual theme : " Well , faith , my dear Charles , between ourselves , I think we have made an excellent day's work of it ".—Pretty well , " cried I , not knowing what to say—What ! only pretty well " ! returned she , " I think it is very well. Suppose the girls should come to make acquaintances of taste in town ! and this I am assured of , that London is the only place in the world for all manner of husbands. Besides , my dear , stranger things happen every day : and as ladies of quality are so taken with my daughters , what will not men of quality be ! *Entre nous*

“ I protest I like my Lady Blarney vastly ,
” so very obliging. However , Miss Ca-
rolina Wilemina Amelia Skeggs has my
warm heart. But yet , when they came
to talk of places in town , you saw at
once how I nailed them. Tell me , my
dear , don’t you think I did for my children
there ?——“ Ay ” , returned I , not
knowing well what to think of the matter ,
“ Heaven grant they may be both the bet-
ter for it this day three months ” ! This
was one of those observations I usually
made to impress my wife with an opinion
of my sagacity ; for if the girls succeeded ,
then it was a pious wish fulfilled ; but if
any thing unfortunate ensued , then it might
be looked upon as a prophecy. All this
conversation , however , was only prepara-
tory to another scheme , and indeed I dread-
ed as much. This was nothing less than ,
that as we were now to hold up our heads
a little higher in the world , it would be
proper to sell the Colt , which was grown
old , at a neighbouring fair , and buy us an
horse that would carry single or double
upon an occasion , and make a pretty ap-
pearance at church , or upon a visit. This
at first I opposed stoutly ; but it was as
stoutly defended. However , as I weakened ,
my antagonist gained strength , till at last
it was resolved to part with him.

As the fair happened on the following

day, I had intentions of going myself; but my wife persuaded me that I had got a cold, and nothing could prevail upon her to permit me from home. "No, my dear", said she, "our son Moses is a discreet boy, and can buy and sell to very good advantage; you know all our great bargains are of his pur-chasing. He always stands out and higgles, and actually tires them till he gets a bar-gain".

As I had some opinion of my son's prudence, I was willing enough to intrust him with this commission, and the next morning I perceived his sisters mighty busy in fitting out Moses for the fair; trimming his hair, brushing his buckles, and cocking his hat with pins. The business of the toilet being over, we had at last the satisfaction of seeing him mounted upon the Colt, with a deal box before him to bring home groceries in. He had on a coat made of that cloth they call thunder and lightning, which, though grown too short, was much too good to be thrown away. His waistcoat was of gosling green, and his sisters had tied his hair with a broad black ribband. We all followed him several paces from the door, bawling after him good luck, good luck, till we could see him no longer.

He was scarce gone, when Mr Thornhill's butler came to congratulate us upon our good fortune, saying, that he overheard

his young master mention our names with great commendations.

Good fortune seemed resolved not to come alone. Another footman from the same family followed, with a card for my daughters, importing, that the two ladies had received such a pleasing account from Mr Thornhill of us all, that, after a few previous inquiries more, they hoped to be perfectly satisfied. "Ay", cried my wife, "I now see it is no easy matter to get into the families of the great; but when one once gets in, then, as Moses says, they may go sleep". To this piece of humour, for she intended it for wit, my daughters assented with a loud laugh of pleasure. In short, such was her satisfaction at this message, that she actually put her hand to her pocket, and gave the messenger seven pence halfpenny.

This was to be our visiting-day. The next that came was Mr Burchell, who had been at the fair. He brought my little ones a penny worth of gingerbread each, which my wife undertook to keep for them and gave them by letters at a time. He brought my daughters also a couple of boxes, in which they might keep wafers, snuff, patches, or even money, when they got it. My wife was usually fond of a weasel skin purse, as being the most lucky; but this by the bye. We had still a regard for Mr Burchell, tho' his late rude behaviour was in some measure

displeasing; nor could we now avoid communicating our happiness to him, and asking his advice: although we seldom followed advice, we were all ready enough to ask it. When he read the note from the two ladies, he shook his head, and observed, that an affair of this sort demanded the utmost circumspection.—This air of diffidence highly displeased my wife. « I never doubt-
» ed, Sir », cried she, « your readiness to
» be against my daughters and me. You
» have more circumspection than is wanted.
» However, I fancy when we come to ask
» advice, we will apply to persons who seem
» to have made use of it themselves ».—
» Whatever my own conduct may have been,
» Madam », replied he, « is not the present
» question; tho' as I have made no use of
» advice myself, I should in conscience
» give it to those that will ».—As I was
apprehensive this answer might draw on a
repartee, making up by abuse what it wanted
in wit, I changed the subject, by seeming to
wonder what could keep our son so long at
the fair, as it was now almost night-fall.
« —Never mind our son », cried my wife,
« depend upon it he knows what he is
» about. I'll warrant we'll never see him
» sell his hen of a rainy day. I have seen
» him buy such bargains as would amaze
» one. I'll tell you a good story about that,
» that will make you split your sides with

» laughing—But as I live, yonder comes
» Moses, without an horse, and the box at
» his back ».

As she spoke, Moses came slowly on foot, and sweating under the deal box, which he had strapt round his shoulders.—“Welcomē,
» welcome, Moses; well, my boy, what
» have you brought us from the fair?—
» I have brought you myself”, cried Moses,
with a fly look, and resting the box on the
dresser.—“Ay, Moses”, cried my wife,
» that we know, but where is the horſe? “
“I have ſold him”, cried Moses, “for three
» pounds five ſhillings and two pence”.—
» Well done, my good boy”, returned ſhe,
» I knew you would touch them off. Be-
» tween ourelfes, three pounds five ſhil-
» lings and two-pence is no bad day’s work.
» Come, let us have it then”.—“I have
» brought back no money”, cried Moses
again, “I have laid it all out in a bargain,
» and here it is”, pulling out a bundle from
his breast: “here they are; a groce of
» green ſpectacles, with ſilver rims and
» ſhagreen cafes”.—“A groce of
» green ſpectacles”! repeated my wife in a
faint voice. “And you have parted with
» the Colt, and brought us back nothing
» but a groce of green paulyry ſpectacles”?—
—“Dear mother”, cried the boy,
“why won’t you listen to reason? I had
» them a dead bargain, or I ſhould not have

» have bought them. The silver rims alone
» will sell for double the money——”
» A fig for the silver rims », cried my wife,
in a passion : “ I dare swear they won’t sell
» for above half the money at the rate of
» broken silver , five shillings an ounce ”.
» —— You need be under no uneasi-
» ness ” , cried I , “ about selling the rims ;
» for I perceive they are only copper var-
» nished over ”.—What ” , cried my wife ,
» not silver , the rims not silver ” ! “ No ” ,
» cried I , “ no more silver than your sauce-
» pan ”.—And so ” , returned she , “ we
» have parted with the Colt , and have only
» got a groce of green spectacles , with cop-
» per rims and shagreen cases ? A murrain
» take such trumpery . The blockhead has
» been imposed upon , and should have
» known his company better ”.—“ There ,
» my dear ” , cried I , “ you are wrong , he
» should not have known them at all ”.—
» Marry , hang the ideot ” , returned she a-
gain , “ to bring me such stuff ; if I had them
» I would throw them into the fire ”. “ There
» again you are wrong , my dear ” , cried I ;
» for though they be copper , we will keep
» them by us , as copper spectacles , you
» know , are better than nothing ”.

By this time the unfortunate Moses was undeceived. He now saw that he had indeed been imposed upon by a prowling sharper , who , observing his figure , had mark-

ed him for an easy prey. I therefore asked the circumstances of his deception. He sold the horse, it seems, and walked the fair in search of another. A reverend looking man brought him to a tent, under a pretence of having one to sell. "Here," continued Moses, "we met another man, very well drest, who desired to borrow twenty pounds upon these, saying, that he wanted money, and would dispose of them for a third of the value. The first gentleman, who pretended to be my friend, whispered me to buy them, and cautioned me not to let so good an offer pass. I sent for Mr. Flamborough, and they talked him up as finely as they did me, and so at last we were persuaded to buy the two groce between us".

C H A P. X I I I.

Mr Burchell is found to be an enemy; for he has the confidence to give disagreeable advice.

OUR family had now made several attempts to be fine; but some unforeseen disaster demolished each as soon as projected. I endeavoured to take the advantage of every disappointment, to improve their good sense in proportion as they were frus-

trated in ambition. "You see, my children", cried I, "how little is to be got by attempts to impose upon the world, in coping with our betters. Such as are poor and will associate with none but the rich, are hated by those they avoid, and despised by those they follow. Unequal combinations are always disadvantageous to the weaker side: the rich having the pleasure, and the poor the inconveniences that result from them. But come, Dick, my boy, and repeat the fable that you were reading to-day, for the good of the company".

"Once upon a time", cried the child, "a Giant and a Dwarf were friends, and kept together. They made a bargain that they would never forsake each other, but go seek adventures. The first battle they fought was with two Saracens, and the Dwarf, who was very courageous, dealt one of the champions a most angry blow. It did the Saracen but very little injury, who lifting up his sword fairly struck off the poor Dwarf's arm. He was now in a woe-ful plight; but the Giant coming to his assistance, in a short time left the two Saracens dead on the plain, and the Dwarf cut off the dead man's head out of spite. They then travelled on to another adventure. This was against three bloody-minded Satyrs, who were carrying away

» a damsel in distress. The Dwarf was not
» quite so fierce now as before ; but for all
» that , struck the first blow , which was re-
» turned by another , that knocked out his
» eye : but the Giant was soon up with
» them , and had they not fled , would cer-
» tainly have killed them every one. They
» were all very joyful for this victory , and
» the damsel who was relieved fell in love
» with the Giant , and married him. They now
» travelled far , and farther than I can tell ,
» till they met with a company of robbers.
» The Giant , for the first time , was fore-
» most now : but the Dwarf was not far be-
» hind. The battle was stout and long.
» Wherever the Giant came all fell be-
» fore him ; but the Dwarf had like to
» have been killed more than once. At last
» the victory declared for the two adven-
» turers ; but the Dwarf lost his leg. The
» Dwarf was now without an arm , a leg ,
» and an eye , while the Giant , who was
» without a single wound , cried out to him ,
» Come on , my little hero ; this is glorious
» sport ; let us get one victory more , and
» then we shall have honour for ever. No ,
» cries the Dwarf , who was by this time
» grown wiser , no , I declare off ; I'll fight
» no more : for I find in every battle that
» you get all the honour and rewards , but
» all the blows fall upon me ».

I was going to moralize this fable , when

our attention was called off to a warm dispute between my wife and Mr Burchell, upon my daughters intended expedition to town. My wife very strenuously insisted upon the advantages that would result from it. Mr Burchell, on the contrary, dissuaded her with great ardor, and I stood neuter. His present dissuasions seemed but the second part of those which were received with so ill a grace in the morning. The dispute grew high, while poor Deborah, instead of reasoning stronger, talked louder, and at last was obliged to take shelter from a defeat in clamour. The conclusion of her harangue, however, was highly displeasing to us all: she knew, she said, of some who had their own secret reasons for what they advised; but, for her part, she wished such to stay away from her house for the future. —
“ Madam ”, cried Burchell, with looks of great composure, which tended to enflame her the more, “ as for secret reasons, you ” are right: I have secret reasons, which I ” forbear to mention, because you are not ” able to answer those of which I make no ” secret; but I find my visits here are become ” troublesome; I’ll take my leave therefore ” now, and perhaps come once more to take ” final farewell when I am quitting the coun- ” try ”. Thus saying, he took up his hat, nor could the attempts of Sophia, whose looks seemed to upbraid his precipitancy, prevent his going.

When gone, we all regarded each other for some minutes with confusion. My wife, who knew herself to be the cause, strove to hide her concern with a forced smile, and an air of assurance, which I was willing to reprove: "How, woman", cried I to her, "is it thus we treat strangers? Is it thus we return their kindness? Be assured, my dear, that these were the harshest words, and to me the most unpleasing that ever escaped your lips!—“Why would he provoke me then”, replied she; “but I know the motives of his advice perfectly well. He would prevent my girls from going to town, that he may have the pleasure of my youngest daughter’s company here at home. But whatever happens, she shall chuse better company, than such low-liv’d fellows as he”.—“Low-liv’d, my dear, do you call him”? cried I, “it is very possible we may mistake this man’s character: for he seems upon some occasions the most finished gentleman I ever knew.—Tell me, Sophia, my girl, has he ever given you any secret instances of his attachment?—His conversation with me, Sir”, replied my daughter, “has ever been sensible, modest, and pleasing; as to aught else, no, never. Once, indeed, I remember to have heard him say, he never knew a woman who could find merit in a man that seemed poor”. “Such,

“ my dear ” , cried I , “ is the common cant
” of all the unfortunate or idle ; but I hope
” you have been taught to judge properly
” of such men , and that it would be even
” madness to expect happiness from one
” who has been so very bad an economist
” of his own. Your mother and I have
” now better prospects for you. The next
” winter , which you will probably spend
” in town , will give you opportunities of
” making a more prudent choice ” .

What Sophia’s reflections were upon this occasion , I can’t pretend to determine ; but I was not displeased at the bottom , that we were rid of a guest from whom I had much to fear. Our breach of hospitality went to my conscience a little : but I quickly silenced that monitor by two or three specious reasons , which served to satisfy and reconcile me to myself. The pain which conscience gives the man who has already done wrong , is soon got over. Conscience is a coward , and those faults it has not strength enough to prevent it seldom has justice enough to punish by accusing.

C H A P. X I V.

*Fresh mortifications, or a demonstration
that seeming calamities may be real bles-
sings.*

THE journey of my daughters to town was now resolved upon, Mr Thornhill having kindly promised to inspect their conduct himself, and inform us by letter of their behaviour. But it was indispensably necessary that their appearance should equal the greatness of their expectations, which could not be done without some expence. We debated therefore in full council what were the easiest methods of raising money, or, more properly speaking, what we could most conveniently sell. The deliberation was soon finished, it was found that our remaining horse was utterly useless for the plow, without his companion, and equally unfit for the road, as wanting an eye. It was therefore determined that we should dispose of him for the purposes above-mentioned, at the neighbouring fair, and, to prevent imposition, that I should go with him myself. Though this was one of the first mercantile transactions of my life, yet I had no doubt about acquitting myself with reputation. The opinion a man forms of

his own prudence is measured by that of the company he keeps, and as mine was mostly in the family way, I had conceived no unfavourable sentiments of my worldly wisdom. My wife, however, next morning, at parting, after I had got some paces from the door, called me back, to advise me, in a whisper, to have all my eyes about me.

I had, in the usual forms, when I came to the fair, put my horse through all his paces: but for some time had no bidders. At last a chapman approached, and after he had for a good while examined the horse round, finding him blind of one eye, would have nothing to say to him: a second came up; but observing he had a spavin, declared he would not take him for the driving home: a third perceived he had a windgal, and would bid no money: a fourth knew by his eye that he had the botts: a fifth, more impertinent than all the rest, wondered what a plague I could do at the fair with a blind, spavined, galled hack, that was only fit to be cut up for a dog kennel. By this time I began to have a most hearty contempt for the poor animal myself, and was almost ashamed at the approach of every new customer; for tho' I did not entirely believe all the fellows told me; yet I reflected that the number of witnesses was a strong presumption they were right, and St Gregory, upon

upon good works, professes himself to be of the same opinion.

I was in this mortifying situation, when a brother clergyman, an old acquaintance, who had also business at the fair, came up, and shaking me by the hand, proposed adjourning to a public-house, and taking a glass of whatever we could get. I readily closed with the offer, and entering an ale-house, we were shewn into a little back room, where there was only a venerable old man, who sat wholly intent over a large book, which he was reading. I never in my life saw a figure that prepossessed me more favourably. His locks of silver grey venerably shaded his temples, and his green old age seemed to be the result of health and benevolence. However, his presence did not interrupt our conversation; my friend and I discoursed on the various turns of fortune we had met: the Whistonian controversy, my last pamphlet, the archdeacon's reply, and the hard measure that was dealt me. But our attention was in a short time taken off by the appearance of a youth, who, entering the room, respectfully said something softly to the old stranger. "Make no apologies, my child", said the old man, "to do good is a duty we owe to all our fellow-creatures: take this, I wish it were more; but five pounds will relieve your distress, and you are welcome." The mo-

dest youth shed tears of gratitude, and yet his gratitude was scarce equal to mine. I could have hugged the good old man in my arms, his benevolence pleased me so. He continued to read, and we resumed our conversation, until my companion, after some time, recollecting that he had business to transact in the fair, promised to be soon back; adding that he always desired to have as much of Dr. Primrose's company as possible. The old gentleman, hearing my name mentioned, seemed to look at me with attention, and when my friend was gone, most respectfully demanded if I was any way related to the great Primrose, that courageous monogamist, who had been the bulwark of the church. Never did my heart feel sincerer rapture than at that moment. "Sir," cried I, "the applause of so good a man, as I am sure you are, adds to that happiness in my breast which your benevolence has already excited. You behold before you, Sir, that doctor Primrose, the monogamist, whom you have been pleased to call great. You here see that unfortunate Divine, who has so long, and it would ill become me to say, successfully, fought against the deuterogamy of the age." "Sir," cried the stranger, struck with awe, "I fear I have been too familiar; but you'll forgive my curiosity. Sir: I beg pardon." "Sir," cried I, grasp-

ing his hand «you are so far from dis-
» pleasing me by your familiarity, that I
» must beg you'll accept my friendship, as
» you already have all my esteem». —

«Then with gratitude I accept the offer»,
cried he, squeezing me by the hand, «thou
» glorious pillar of unshaken orthodoxy;
» and do I behold—I here interrupted what
he was going to say; for tho' as an au-
thor, I could digest no small share of flat-
tery, yet now my modesty would permit
no more. However, no lovers in romance
ever cemented a more instantaneous friend-
ship. We talked upon several subjects: at
first I thought he seemed rather devout than
learned, and began to think he despised all
human doctrines as dross. Yet this no way
lessened him in my esteem; for I had for
some time begun privately to harbour such
an opinion myself. I therefore took occa-
sion to observe, that the world in general
began to be blameably indifferent as to doc-
trinal matters, and followed human specu-
lations too much—— «Ay, Sir», replied
he, as if he had reserved all his learning to
that moment, «Ay, Sir, the world is in its
» dotage, and yet the cosmogony or crea-
» tion of the world has puzzled philosophers
» of all ages. What a medley of opinions
» have they not broached upon the crea-
» tion of the world? Sanconiathon, Ma-
» netho, Berosus, and Ocellus Lucanus,

have all attempted it in vain. The latter has these words, *Anarchon ara kai metelutaion to pan*, which imply, that all things have neither beginning nor end. Manetho also, who lived about the time of Nebuchadon-Affer, Affer being a Syriac word usually applied as a surname to the kings of that country, as Teglat Phael-Affer, Nabon-Affer, he, I say, formed a conjecture equally absurd; for as we usually say *ek to biblion kubernetes*, which implies that books will never teach the world; so he attempted to investigate.— But, Sir, I ask pardon, I am straying from the question.— That he actually was; nor could I for my life see how the creation of the world had any thing to do with the business I was talking of; but it was sufficient to shew me that he was a man of letters, and I now reverenced him the more. I was resolved therefore to bring him to the touch-stone; but he was too mild, and too gentle to contend for victory. Whenever I made any observation that looked like a challenge to controversy, he would smile, shake his head, and say nothing; by which I understood he could say much, if he thought proper. The subject therefore insensibly changed from the business of antiquity to that which brought us both to the fair; mine I told him was to sell an horse, and very luckily, indeed, his was to buy one for

one of his tenants. My horse was soon produced, and in fine we struck a bargain. Nothing now remained but to pay me, and he accordingly pulled out a thirty pound note, and bid me change it. Not being in a capacity of complying with his demand, he ordered the landlady to call up his footman, who made his appearance in a very genteel manner. «Here, Abraham», cri-
he, «go and get gold for this; you'll do
» it at neighbour Jackson's or any where». While the fellow was gone, he entertained me with a pathetic harangue on the great scarcity of silver, which I undertook to im-
prove, by deplored also the great scarcity
of gold; and by the time Abraham returned, we had both agreed that money was never so hard to be come at as now. Abraham returned to inform us that he had been over the whole fair, and could not get change, tho' he had offered half a crown for doing it. This was a very great disappoint-
ment to us all; but the old gentleman ha-
ving paused a little, asked me if I knew one Solomon Flamborough in my part of the country: upon replying that he was my next door neighbour, «If that be the case then,» returned he, «I believe we shall deal. You
» shall have a draught upon him payable at
» sight; and let me tell you, he is as warm
» a man as any within five miles round him.
» Honest Solomon and I have been acquaint-

» ed for many years together. I remember
» I always beat him at three jumps; but
» he could hop upon one leg farther than
» I ». A draught upon my neighbour was
to me the same as money; for I was suffi-
ciently convinced of his ability: the draught
was signed and put into my hands, and Mr
Jenkinson the old gentleman, his man A-
braham, and my horse, old Blackberry, trot-
ted off very well pleased with each other.

Being now left to reflection, I began to recollect that I had done wrong in taking a draught from a stranger, and so prudently resolved upon having back my horse, and following the purchaser. But this was now too late: I therefore made directly home-wards, resolving to get the draught chan-
ged into money at my friend's as fast as pos-
sible. I found my honest neighbour smok-
ing his pipe at his own door, and inform-
ing him that I had a small bill upon him, he
read it twice over. « You can read the
» name, I suppose », cried I, « Ephraim
» Jenkinson ». Yes, » returned he, « the
» name is written plain enough, and I know
» the gentleman too, the greatest rascal un-
» der the canopy of heaven. This is the
» very same rogue who sold us the specta-
» cles. Was he not, a venerable looking
» man, with grey hair, and no flaps to his
» pocket-holes? And did he not talk a long
» string of learning about Greek and cos-

» mogony, and the world»? To this I replied with a groan. «Aye», continued he, «he has but that one piece of learning in the world, and he always talks it away whenever he finds a scholar in company: but I know the rogue and will catch him yet».

Though I was already sufficiently mortified, my greatest struggle was to come, in facing my wife and daughters. No truant was ever more afraid of returning to school there to behold the master's sweet visage, than I was of going home. I was determined, however, to anticipate their fury, by first falling into a passion myself.

But, alas! upon entering, I found the family no way disposed for battle. My wife and girls were all in tears, Mr Thornhill having been there that day to inform them, that their journey to town was entirely over: The two ladies having heard reports of us from some malicious person about us, were that day set out for London. He could neither discover the tendency, nor the author of these: but whatever they might be, or whoever might have broached them, he continued to assure our family of his friendship and protection. I found, therefore, that they bore my disappointment with great resignation, as it was eclipsed in the greatness of their own. But what perplexed us most was to think who

could be so base as to asperse the character of a family so harmless as ours, too humble to excite envy, and too inoffensive to create disgust.

C H A P. X V.

All Mr. Burchell's villainy at once detected.

The folly of being overwise.

THAT evening, and a part of the following day, was employed in fruitless attempts to discover our enemies: scarce a family in the neighbourhood but incurred our suspicions, and each of us had reasons for our opinion best known to ourselves. As we were in this perplexity, one of our little boys, who had been playing abroad, brought in a letter-case, which he found on the green. It was quickly known to belong to Mr Burchell, with whom it had been seen, and, upon examination, contained some hints upon different subjects; but what particularly engaged our attention was a sealed note, superscribed, *the copy of a letter to be sent to the two ladies at Thornhill castle.* It instantly occurred that he was the base informer, and we deliberated whether the note should not be broken open. I was against it; but Sophia, who said she was sure that of all men he would be the last to be guilty of so much baseness,

insisted upon its being read. In this she was seconded by the rest of the family, and, at their joint solicitation, I read as follows:

LADIES,

“THE bearer will sufficiently satisfy you as to the person from whom this comes: one at least the friend of innocence, and ready to prevent its being seduced. I am informed for a truth, that you have some intentions of bringing two young ladies to town, whom I have some knowledge of, under the character of companions. As I would neither have simplicity imposed upon, nor virtue contaminated, I must offer it as my opinion, that the impropriety of such a step will be attended with dangerous consequences. It has never been my way to treat the infamous or the lewd with severity; nor should I now have taken this method of explaining myself, or reproving folly, did it not aim at guilt. Take therefore the admonition of a friend, and seriously reflect on the consequences of introducing infamy and vice into retreats, where peace and innocence have hitherto resided.”

Our doubts were now at an end. There seemed indeed something applicable to both sides in this letter, and its censure might as well be referred to those to whom it was

written, as to us; but the malicious meaning was obvious, and we went no farther. My wife had scarce patience to hear me to the end, but railed at the writer with unrestrained resentment. Olivia was equally severe, and Sophia seemed perfectly amazed at his baseness. As for my part, it appeared to me one of the vilest instances of unprovoked ingratitude I had met with. Nor could I account for it in any other manner, than by imputing it to his desire of detaining my youngest daughter in the country, to have the more frequent opportunities of an interview. In this manner we all sat ruminating upon schemes of vengeance, when our other little boy came running in to tell us that Mr Burchell was approaching at the other end of the field. It is easier to conceive than describe, the complicated sensations which are felt from the pain of a recent injury, and the pleasure of approaching revenge. Tho' our intentions were only to upbraid him with his ingratitude; yet it was resolved to do it in a manner that would be perfectly cutting. For this purpose we agreed to meet him with our usual smiles, to chat in the beginning with more than ordinary kindness, to amuse him a little; but then in the midst of the flattering calm to burst upon him like an earthquake, and overwhelm him with the sense of his own baseness. This being resolved

upon, my wife undertook to manage the business herself, as she really had some talents for such an undertaking. We saw him approach, he entered, drew a chair, and sat down.—“A fine day, Mr Burchell”.—“A very fine day, Doctor; tho’ I fancy we shall have some rain by the shooting of my corns”.—“The shooting of your horns”, cried my wife, in a loud fit of laughter, and then asked pardon for being fond of a joke.—“Dear Madam”, replied he, “I pardon you with all my heart; for I protest I should not have thought it a joke till you told me”.—“Perhaps not, Sir”, cried my wife, winking at us, “and yet I dare say you can tell us how many jokes go to an ounce”.—I fancy, “Madam”, returned Burchell, yon have been reading a jest-book this morning, “that ounce of jokes is so very good a concert; and yet, Madam, I had rather see half an ounce of understanding”.—I believe you might”, cried my wife, still smiling at us, though the laugh was against her; “and yet I have seen some men pretend to understanding that have very little”.—“And no doubt” replied her antagonist, “you have known ladies set up for wit that had none”.—I quickly began to find that my wife was likely to gain but little at this business; so I resolved to treat him in a stile of more se-

verity myself. "Both wit and understanding", cried I, "are trifles, without integrity: it is that which gives value to every character. The ignorant peasant, without fault, is greater than the philosopher with many; for what is genius or courage without an heart! *An honest man is the noblest work of God*".

"I always held that favourite maxim of Pope", returned Mr Burchell, "as very unworthy a man of genius, and a base desertion of his own superiority. As the reputation of books is raised, not by their freedom from defect, but the greatness of their beauties; so should that of men be prized, not for their exemption from fault, but the size of those virtues they are possessed of. The scholar may want prudence, the statesman may have pride, and the champion ferocity; but shall we prefer to these men the low mechanic, who laboriously plods on through life, without censure or applause? We might as well prefer the tame correct paintings of the Flemish school to the erroneous, but sublime animations of the Roman pencil".

"Sir", replied I, "your present observation is just, when there are shining virtues and minute defects; but when it appears that great vices are opposed in the same mind to as extraordinary virtues, such a character deserves contempt".

“Perhaps”, cried he, “there may be some such monsters as you describe, of great vices joined to great virtues; yet in my progress through life, I never yet found one instance of their existence: on the contrary, I have ever perceived, that where the mind was capacious, the affections were good. And indeed Providence seems kindly our friend in this particular, thus to debilitate the understanding where the heart is corrupt, and diminish the power where there is the will to do mischief. This rule seems to extend even to other animals: the little vermin race are ever treacherous, cruel, and cowardly, whilst those endowed with strength and power are generous, brave, and gentle”.

“These observations found well”, returned I, “and yet it would be easy this moment to point out a man”, and I fixed my eye steadfastly upon him, “whose head and heart form a most detestable contrast. Ay, Sir”, continued I, raising my voice, “and I am glad to have this opportunity of detecting him in the midst of his fancied security. Do you know this, Sir, this pocket-book”?——“Yes Sir”, returned he, with a face of impenetrable assurance, “that pocket-book is mine, and I am glad you have found it”.——“And do you know”, cried I, “this letter?

” Nay, never falter, man; but look me full
” in the face: I say, do you know this let-
” ter? — “ that letter ”, returned he,
” yes, it was I that wrote that letter ”.—
” And how could you ”, said I, “ so base-
” ly, so ungratefully presume to write
” this letter ”! — “ And how came you ”,
replied he, with looks of unparalleled effron-
tary, “ so basely to presume to break open
” this letter ? Don’t you know now, I
” could hang you all for this ? All that I
” have to do, is to swear at the next just-
” ice’s, that you have been guilty of break-
” ing open the lock of my pocket-book, and
” so hang you all up at his door ”. This
piece of unexpected insolence raised me to
such a pitch, that I could scarce govern my
passion. “ Ungrateful wretch, begone, and
” no longer pollute my dwelling with thy
” baseness. Begone, and never let me see
” thee again: go from my doors, and the
” only punishment I wish thee is an alarm-
” ed conscience, which will be a sufficient
” tormentor ” ! So saying, I threw him his
pocket-book, which he took up with a smile,
and shutting the clasps with the utmost com-
posure, left us, quite astonished at the se-
renity of his assurance. My wife was par-
ticularly enraged that nothing could make
him angry, or make him seem ashamed of
his villainies, “ My dear ”, cried I, willing
to calm those passions that had been raised

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too high among us, « we are not to be surprised that bad men want shame ; they only blush at being detected in doing good, but glory in their vices.

» Guilt and Shame, says the allegory, » were at first companions , and in the beginning of their journey inseparably kept together. But their union was soon found to be disagreeable and inconvenient to both ; Guilt gave Shame frequent uneasiness , and Shame often betrayed the secret conspiracies of guilt. After long disagreement , therefore , they at length consented to part for ever. Guilt boldly walked forward alone , to overtake Fate , that went before in the shape of an executioner : but Shame being naturally timorous , returned back to keep company with Virtue , which , in the beginning of their journey , they had left behind. Thus , my children , after men have travelled thro' a few stages in vice , they no longer continue to have shame at doing evil , and shame attends only upon their virtues ».

C H A P . X V I .

The family use art, which is opposed with still greater.

WHATEVER might have been Sophia's sensations, the rest of the family was easily

consoled for Mr Burchell's absence by the company of our landlord, whose visits now became more frequent and longer. Though he had been disappointed in procuring my daughters the amusements of the town, as he designed, he took every opportunity of supplying them with those little recreations which our retirement would admit of. He usually came in the morning, and while my son and I followed our occupations abroad, he sat with the family at home, and amused them by describing the town, with every part of which he was particularly acquainted. He could repeat all the observations that were retailed in the atmosphere of the play-houses, and had all the good things of the high wits by rote long before they made way into the jest-books. The intervals between conversation were employed in teaching my daughters piquet, or sometimes in setting my two little ones to box to make them *sharp*, as he called it: but the hopes of having him for a son-in-law, in some measure blinded us to all his defects. It must be owned that my wife laid a thousand schemes to entrap him, or, to speak it more tenderly, used every art to magnify the merit of her daughter. If the cakes at tea eat short and crisp, they were made by Olivia: if the gooseberry wine was well knit, the gooseberries were of her gathering: it was her fingers

gave the pickles their peculiar green ; and in the composition of a pudding, her judgment was infallible. Then the poor woman would sometimes tell the 'Squire, that she thought him and Olivia extremely like each other , and would bid both stand up to see which was tallest. These instances of cunning, which she thought impenetrable, yet which every body saw through , were very pleasing to our benefactor , who gave every day some new proofs of his passion , which though they had not arisen to proposals of marriage , yet we thought fell but little short of it ; and his shyness was attributed sometimes to native bashfulness , and sometimes to his fear of offending a rich uncle. An occurrence , however , which happened soon after, put it beyond a doubt that he designed to become one of the family , my wife even regarded it as an absolute promise.

My wife and daughters happening to return a visit to neighbour Flamborough's , found that family had lately got their pictures drawn by a limmer , who travelled the country , and did them for fifteen shillings a-head. As this family and ours had long a sort of rivalry in point of taste , our spirit took the alarm at this stolen march upon us , and notwithstanding all I could say , and I said much , it was resolved that we should have our pictures done too. Ha-

ving, therefore, engaged the limner, (for what could I do?) our next deliberation was to shew the superiority of our taste in the attitudes. As for our neighbour's family, there were seven of them, and they were drawn with seven oranges, a thing quite out of taste, no variety in life, no composition in the world. We desired to have something done in a brighter style, and, after many debates, at length came to an unanimous resolution to be drawn together, in one large historical family piece. This would be cheaper, since one frame would serve for all, and it would be infinitely more genteel; for all families of any taste were now drawn in the same manner. As we did not immediately recollect an historical subject to hit us, we were contented each with being drawn as independent historical figures. My wife desired to be represented as Venus, with a stomacher richly set with diamonds, and her two little ones as Cupids by her side, while I, in my gown and band, was to present her with my books on the Bangorean controversy. Olivia would be drawn as an Amazon, fitting upon a bank of flowers, drest in a green Joseph, laced with gold, and a whip in her hand. Sophia was to be a shepherdess, with as many sheep as the painter could spare; and Moses was to be drest out with an hat and white feather. Our taste so

much pleased the Squire, that he insisted on being put in as one of the family in the character of Alexander the great, at Olivia's feet. This was considered by us all as an indication of his desire to be introduced into the family in reality, nor could we refuse his request. The painter was therefore set to work, and as he wrought with assiduity and expedition, in less than four days the whole was compleated. The piece was large, and it must be owned he did not spare his colours; for which my wife gave him great encomiums. We were all perfectly satisfied with his performance; but an unfortunate circumstance had not occurred till the picture was finished, which now struck us with dismay. It was so very large that we had no place in the house to fix it. How we all came to disregard so material a point is inconceiveable; but certain it is, we were this time all greatly overseen. Instead therefore of gratifying our vanity as we hoped, there it leaned, in a most mortifying manner, against the kitchen wall, where the canvas was stretched and painted, much too large to be got through any of the doors, and the jest of all our neighbours. One compared it to Robinson Crusoe's long-boat, too large to be removed; another thought it more resembled a reel in a bottle; some wondered how it should be got out, and still more were amazed how it ever got in.

But though it excited the ridicule of some, it effectually raised more ill-natured suggestions in many. The 'Squire's portrait being found united with ours, was an honour too great to escape envy. Malicious whispers began to circulate at our expence, and our tranquillity continually to be disturbed by persons who came as friends to tell us what was said of us by our enemies. These reports we always resented with becoming spirit; but scandal ever improves by opposition. We again therefore entered into a consultation upon obviating the malice of our enemies, and at last came to a resolution, which had too much cunning to give me entire satisfaction. It was this: as our principal object was to discover the honour of Mr Thornhill's addresses, my wife undertook to sound him, by pretending to ask his advice in the choice of an husband for her eldest daughter. If this was not found sufficient to induce him to a declaration, it was then fixed upon to terrify him with a rival, which it was thought would compel him, though never so refractory. To this last step, however, I would by no means give my consent, till Olivia gave me the most solemn assurances, that she would marry the person provided to rival him upon this occasion, if Mr Thornhill did not prevent it, by taking her himself. Such was the scheme laid, which though I did not stren-

nuously oppose, I did not entirely approve.

The next time, therefore, that Mr Thornhill came to see us, my girls took care to be out of the way, in order to give their Mamma an opportunity of putting her scheme in execution; but they only retired to the next room, from whence they could overhear the whole conversation; which my wife artfully introduced, by observing that one of the Miss Flamboroughs was likely to have a very good match of it in Mr Spanker. To this the Squire assenting, she proceeded to remark, that they who had warm fortunes were always sure of getting good husbands: "But Heaven help", continued she, "the girls that have none." What signifies beauty, Mr Thornhill? or what signifies all the virtue, and all the qualifications in the world, in this age of self-interest? It is not, what is she? but what has she? is all the cry".

"Madam", returned he, "I highly approve the justice, as well as the novelty, of your remarks, and if I were a king, it should be otherwise. It would then, indeed, be fine times with the girls without fortunes: our two young ladies should be the first for whom I would provide."

"Ah, Sir! returned my wife, "you are pleased to be facetious: but I wish I were a queen, and then I know where they should look for an husband. But now that you have

“ put it into my head , seriously , Mr Thornhill , can’t you recommend me a proper husband for my eldest girl ? She is now nineteen years old , well grown , and well educated , and , in my humble opinion , does not want for parts ”.

“ Madam ” , replied he , “ If I were to chuse , I would find out a person possessed of every accomplishment that can make an angel happy . One with prudence , fortune , taste , and sincerity : such , Madam , would be , in my opinion , the proper husband ”. “ Ah , Sir ” , said she , “ but do you know of any such person ”? — “ No , Madam ” returned he , “ it is impossible to know any person that deserves to be her husband : she’s too great a treasure for one man’s possession : she’s a goddefs . Upon my soul , I speak what I think , she’s an angel ”.—“ Ah , Mr Thornhill , you only flatter my poor girl : but we have been thinking of marrying her to one of your tenants , whose mother is lately dead , and who wants a manager : you know whom I mean , farmer Williams ; a warm man , Mr Thornhill , able to give her good bread ; ay , and who has several times made her proposals : (which was actually the case) “ but , Sir ” , concluded she , “ I should be glad to have your approbation of our choice ”.—“ How , Madam ” , replied he , “ my approbation !

» My approbation of such a choice! Never.
» What! Sacrifice so much beauty, and
» sense, and goodness, to a creature insen-
» sible of the blessing! Excuse me, I can
» never approve of such a piece of injus-
» tice! And I have my reasons! » — « In-
» deed, Sir », cried Deborah, « if you have
» your reasons, that's another affair; but
» I should be glad to know those reasons ». —
— « Excuse me, Madam », returned he,
« they lye too deep for discovery: (laying
his hand upon his bosom) they remain bu-
» ried, rivetted here ».

After he was gone, upon general consul-
tation, we could not tell what to make of
these fine sentiments. Olivia considered them
as instances of the most exalted passion, but
I was not quite so sanguine: it seemed to
be pretty plain, that they had more of love
than matrimony in them: yet, whatever
they might portend, it was resolved to pro-
secute the scheme of farmer Williams, who,
since my daughter's first appearance in the
country, had paid her his addresses.

C H A P. X V I I.

*Scarce any virtue found to resist the power of
long and pleasing temptation.*

As I only studied my child's real happi-
ness, the assiduity of Mr Williams plea-

sed me, as he was in easy circumstances, prudent, and sincere. It required but very little encouragement to revive his former passion; so that in an evening or two after, he and Mr Thornhill met at our house, and surveyed each other for some time with looks of anger: but Williams owed his landlord no rent, and little regarded his indignation. Olivia, on her side, acted the coquet to perfection, if that might be called acting which was her real character, pretending to lavish all her tenderness on her new lover. Mr Thornhill appeared quite dejected at this preference, and with a pensive air took leave, though I own it puzzled me to find him so much in pain as he appeared to be, when he had it in his power so easily to remove the cause, by declaring an honourable passion. But whatever uneasiness he seemed to endure, it could easily be perceived that Olivia's anguish was still greater. After any of these interviews between her lovers, of which there were several, she usually retired to solitude and there indulged her grief. It was in such a situation I found her one evening, after she had been for some time supporting a fictitious gaiety.—“ You now see, my child ”, said I, that your confidence in Mr Thornhill’s passion was all a dream: he permits the rivalry of another, every way his inferior, though he knows it lies

in

» in his power to secure you by a candid
» declaration himself".—"Yes, Papa",
returned she, "but he has his reasons for
this delay: I know he has. The sincerity
of his looks and words convince me of
his real esteem. A short time I hope will
discover the generosity of his sentiments,
and convince you that my opinion of him
has been more just than yours".—"Oli-
via, my darling", returned I, "every
scheme that has been hitherto pursued to
compel him to a declaration, has been
proposed and planned by yourself, nor can
you in the least say that I have constrain-
ed you. But you must not suppose, my
dear, that I will be ever instrumental in
suffering his honest rival to be the dupe
of your ill-placed passion. Whatever
time you require to bring your fancied
admirer to an explanation, shall be grant-
ed; but at the expiration of that term,
if he is still regardless, I must absolutely
insist, that honest Mr Williams shall be re-
warded for his fidelity. The character which
I have hitherto supported in life demands
this from me, and my tenderness, as a
parent, shall never influence my integrity
as a man. Name then your day, let it
be as distant as you think proper, and, in
the mean time, take care to let Mr Thorn-
hill know the exact time on which I de-
sign delivering you up to another. If

" he really loves you, his own good sense
" will readily suggest that there is but one
" method alone to prevent his losing you
" for ever".—This proposal, which she
could not avoid considering as perfectly
just, was readily agreed to. She again re-
newed her most positive promise of marry-
ing Mr Williams, in case of the other's in-
sensibility; and at the next opportunity,
in Mr Thornhill's presence, that day month
was fixed upon for her nuptials with his
rival.

Such vigorous proceedings seemed to redouble Mr Thornhill's anxiety: but what Olivia really felt gave me some uneasiness. In this struggle between prudence and passion, her vivacity quite forsook her, and every opportunity of solitude was sought, and spent in tears. One week passed away; but her lover made no efforts to restrain her nuptials. The succeeding week he was still assiduous; but not more open. On the third he discontinued his visits entirely, and instead of my daughter testifying any impatience, as I expected, she seemed to retain a pensive tranquillity, which I looked upon as resignation. For my own part, I was now sincerely pleased with thinking that my child was going to be secured in a continuance of competence and peace, and frequently applauded her resolution. It was within about four days of her intended nup-

tials, that my little family at night were gathered round a charming fire, telling stories of the past, and laying schemes for the future. Busied in forming a thousand projects, and laughing at whatever folly came uppermost, " Well, Moses, cried I, " we shall soon, my boy, have a wedding in the family, what is your opinion of matters and things in general ?"—" My opinion, father, is, that all things go on very well ; and I was just now thinking, that when sister Livy is married to farmer Williams, we shall then have the loan of his cyder-press and brewing tubs for nothing".—That we shall, Moses", cried I, " and he will sing us Death and the Lady, to raise our spirits into the bargain".— " He has taught that song to our Dick", cried Moses; " and I think he goes through it very prettily".—" Does he so ", cried I, " then let us have it : where's little Dick? let him up with it boldly ".— " My brother Dick", cried Bill my youngest, " is just gone out with sister Livy; but Mr Williams has taught me two songs, and I'll sing them for you, Papa. Which song do you chuse, *the Dying Swan*, or the *Elegy on the death of a mad dog*? The Elegy, child, by all means", said I, " I never heard that yet; and Deborah, my life, grief you know is dry, let us have a bottle of the best gooseberry wine to

“ keep up our spirits. I have wept so much
“ at all sorts of elegies of late, that without
“ an enliv’ning glass I am sure this will
“ overcome me ; and Sophy , love , take
” your guitar , and thrum in with the boy
” a little ”.

An ELEGY on the Death of a Mad Dog.

GOOD people all, of every sort,
 Give ear unto my song ;
And if you find it wond’rous short ,
 It cannot hold you long.

In Islington there was a man ,
 Of whom the world might say ,
That still a godly race he ran ,
 Whene’er he went to pray.

A kind and gentle heart he had ,
 To comfort friends and foes ;
The naked every day he clad ,
 When he put on his clothes.

And in that town a dog was found ,
 As many dogs there be ,
Both mungrel , puppy , whelp , and hound ,
 And curs of low degree.

This dog and man at first were friends ;
 But when a pique began ,
The dog , to gain his private ends ,
 Went mad , and bit the man.

Around from all the neighbouring streets,
 The wondering neighbours ran,
 And swore the dog had lost his wits,
 To bite so good a man.

The wound it seem'd both sore and sad,
 To every Christian eye;
 And while they swore the dog was mad,
 They swore the man would die.

But soon a wonder came to light,
 That shew'd the rogues they ly'd,
 The man recover'd of the bite,
 The dog it was that dy'd.

“A very good boy, Bill, upon my word,
 “and an elegy that may truly be called
 “tragical. Come, my children, here's Bill's
 “health, and may he one day be a bishop.”

“With all my heart”, cried my wife;
 “and if he but preaches as well as he sings,
 “I make no doubt of him. The most of
 “his family, by the mother's side, could
 “sing a good song: it was a common say-
 “ing in our country, that the family of the
 “Blenkinsops could never look straight be-
 “fore them, nor the Hugginses blow out a
 “candle; that there were none of the Gro-
 “grams but could sing a song, or of the
 “Marjorams but could tell a story.”—
 “However that be”, cried I, “the most
 “vulgar ballad of them all generally plea-
 “ses me better than the fine modern odes,

» and things that petrify us in a single stan-
» za ; productions that we at once detest
» and praise. Put the glass to your bro-
» ther , Moses. The great fault of these
» elegists is , that they are in despair for
» griefs that give the sensible part of man-
» kind very little pain. A lady loses her
» lap-dog , and so the silly poet runs home
» to versify the disaster ».

“ That may be the mode ” , cried Moses ,
” in sublimer compositions ; but the Rane-
” lagh songs that come down to us are per-
” fectly familiar , and all cast in the same
” mould : Collin meets Dolly , and they hold
” a dialogue together , he gives her a fair-
” ing to put in her hair , and she presents
” him with a nosegay , and then they go to-
” gether to church , where they give good
” advice to young nymphs and swains to
” get married as fast as they can ” .

“ And very good advice too ” , cried I ,
” and I am told there is not a place in the
” world where advice can be given with
” so much propriety as there ; for as it per-
” suades us to marry , it also furnishes us
” with a wife ; and surely that must be an
” excellent market , my boy , where we are
” told what we want , and supplied with it
” when wanting ” .

“ Yes , Sir ” , returned Moses , “ and I
” know but of two such markets for wives
” in Europe , Ranelagh in England , and

» Fontarabia in Spain. The Spanish market
» is open once a-year, but our English wives
» are saleable every night ».

“ You are right, my boy ”, cried his mother, “ Old England is the only place in the world for husbands to get wives ”.— “ And for wives to manage their husbands ”, interrupted I. “ It is a proverb abroad, ” that if a bridge were built across the sea, “ all the ladies of the Continent would come over to take pattern from ours; for there are no such wives in Europe as our own ”.

“ But let us have one bottle more, Debora, my life, and Moses, give us a good song. What thanks do we not owe to Heaven for thus bestowing tranquillity, health, and competence. I think myself happier now than the greatest monarch upon earth. He has no such fire-side, nor such pleasant faces about it. Yes, Debora, my dear, we are now growing old; but the evening of our life is likely to be happy. We are descended from ancestors that knew no stain, and we shall leave a good and virtuous race of children behind us. While we live they will be our support and our pleasure here, and when we die they will transmit our honour untainted to posterity. Come, my son, we wait for your song: let us have a chorus. But where is my darling Oli-

» via? That little cherub's voice is always
» sweetest in the concert ».—Just as I
spoke, Dick came running in. « O Papa,
» Papa, she is gone from us, she is gone
» from us, my sister Livy is gone from us,
» for ever »—« Gone, child?—Yes, she
» is gone off with two gentlemen in a post
» chaise, and one of them kissed her, and
» said he would die for her; and she cried
» very much, and was for coming back;
» but he persuaded her again, and she went
» into the chaise, and said, O what will
» my poor Papa do when he knows I am
» undone!—Now then », cried I,
» my children, go and be miserable; for we
» shall never enjoy one hour more. And
» O may Heaven's everlasting fury light
» upon him and his! Thus to rob me of my
» child! And sure it will, for taking back
» my sweet innocent that I was leading up
» to heaven. Such sincerity as my child
» was possest of. But all our earthly hap-
» pines is now over! Go, my children, go,
» and be miserable and infamous; for my
» heart is broken within me!—“ Fa-
» ther », cried my son, “ is this your forti-
» tude? ”—“ Fortitude, child! Yes,
» he shall see I have fortitude! Bring me
» my pistols. I'll pursue the traitor. While
» he is on earth I'll pursue him. Old as I
» am, he shall find I can sting him yet. The
» villain! The perfidious villain!—I

had by this time reached down my pistols, when my poor wife, whose passions were not so strong as mine, caught me in her arms. "My dearest, dearest husband", cried she, "the Bible is the only weapon that is fit for your old hands now. Open that, my love, and read our anguish into patience, for she has vilely deceived ——Her sorrow represt the rest in silence. ——“Indeed, Sir”, resumed my son, after a pause, your rage is too violent and unbecoming. You should be my mother’s comforter, and you increase her pain. It ill suited you and your reverend character thus to curse your greatest enemy: you should not to have curst the wretch, villain as he is .—“I did not curse him child, did I”?——“Indeed, Sir, you did, you curst him twice”.——“Then may Heaven forgive me and him if I did. And now, my son, I see it was more than human benevolence that first taught us to bless our enemies! Blest be his holy name for all the good he has given, and for that he has taken away. But it is not, it is not, a small distress that can wring tears from these old eyes, that have not wept for so many years. My child! —To undo my darling! May confusion seize! Heaven forgive me, what am I about to say! You may remember, my love, how good she was, and how charm-

» ing ; till this vile moment all her care
» was to make us happy. Had she but
» died ! But she is gone , the honour of our
» family contaminated , and I must look out
» for happiness in other worlds than here.
» But , my child , you saw them go off : per-
» haps he forced her away ? If he forced
» her , she may yet be innocent ".— " Ah
» no , Sir " ! cried the child , " he only kis-
» sed her , and called her his angel , and she
» wept very much , and leaned upon his
» arm , and they drove off very fast ".—
" She's an ungrateful creature " , cried my
wife , who could scarce speak for weeping ,
" to use us thus . She never had the least
» constraint put upon her affections . The
» vile strumpet has basely deserted her pa-
» rents without any provocation , thus to
» bring your grey hairs to the grave , and
» I must shortly follow ".

In this manner that night , the first of
our real misfortunes , was spent in the bit-
terness of complaint , and ill-supported sal-
lies of enthusiasm . I determined , however ,
to find out our betrayer , wherever he was ,
and reproach his baseness . The next morn-
ing we missed our wretched child at break-
fast , where she used to give life and chear-
fulness to us all . My wife , as before , at-
tempted to ease her heart by reproaches .
" Never " , cried she , " shall that vilest stain
» of our family again darken those harm-

” less doors. I will never call her daughter
” more. No, let the strumpet live with
” her vile seducer: She may bring us to
” shame, but she shall never more deceive
” us ”.

“ Wife ”, said I, “ do not talk thus hard-
” ly: my detestation of her guilt is as great
” as yours; but ever shall this house and
” this heart be open to a poor returning
” repentant sinner. The sooner she returns
” from her transgression, the more welcome
” shall she be to me. For the first time the
” very best may err; art may persuade,
” and novelty spread out its charm. The
” first fault is the child of simplicity; but
” every other the offspring of guilt. Yes,
” the wretched creature shall be welcome
” to this heart and this house, tho’ stained
” with ten thousand vices. I will again
” hearken to the music of her voice, again
” will I hang fondly on her bosom, if I find
” but repentance there. My son, bring hither
” my Bible and my staff; I will pursue her,
” wherever she is, and tho’ I cannot save
” her frome shame, I may prevent the
” continuance of iniquity ”.

CHAP. XVIII.

*The pursuit of a father to reclaim a lost child
to virtue.*

THO' the child could not describe the gentleman's person who handed his sister into the post-chaise, yet my suspicions fell entirely upon our young landlord, whose character for such intrigues was but too well known. I therefore directed my steps towards Thornhill-castle, resolving to upbraid him, and, if possible, to bring back my daughter: but before I had reached his seat, I was met by one of my parishioners, who said he saw a young lady resembling my daughter in a post-chaise with a gentleman, whom, by the description, I could only guess to be Mr Burchell, and that they drove very fast. This information, however, did by no means satisfy me. I therefore went to the young 'Squire's, and though it was yet early, insisted upon seeing him immediately: he soon appeared with the most open familiar air, and seemed perfectly amazed at my daughter's elopement, protesting upon his honour that he was quite a stranger to it. I now therefore condemned my former suspicions, and could turn them only on Mr Burchell, who I recollect had of late several private confer-

ences with her : but the appearance of another witness left me no room to doubt of his villainy , who averred , that he and my daughter were actually gone towards the Wells , about thirty miles off , where there was a great deal of company . Hearing this , I resolved to pursue them there . I walked along with earnestness , and inquired of several by the way ; but received no accounts , till entering the town , I was met by a person on horseback , whom I remembered to have seen at the 'Squire's , and he assured me that if I followed them to the races , which were but thirty miles farther , I might depend upon overtaking them ; for he had seen them dance there the night before , and the whole assembly seemed charmed with my daughter's performance . Early the next day I walked forward to the races , and about four in the afternoon I came upon the course . The company made a very brilliant appearance , all earnestly employed in one pursuit , that of pleasure ; how different from mine , that of reclaiming a lost child to virtue ! I thought I perceived Mr Burchell at some distance from me : but , as if he dreaded an interview ; upon my approaching him , he mixed among a crowd , and I saw him no more . I now reflected that it would be to no purpose to continue my pursuit farther , and resolved to return home to an innocent

family, who wanted my assistance. But the agitations of my mind, and the fatigues I had undergone, threw me into a fever, the symptoms of which I perceived before I came off the course. This was another unexpected stroke, as I was more than seventy miles distant from home: however, I retired to a little ale-house by the road-side, and in this place, the usual retreat of indigence and frugality, I laid me down patiently to wait the issue of my disorder. I languished here for near three weeks; but at last my constitution prevailed, though I was unprovided with money to defray the expences of my entertainment. It is possible the anxiety from this last circumstance alone might have brought on a relapse, had I not been supplied by a traveller, who stopt to take a cursory refreshment. This person was no other than the philanthropic bookseller in St Paul's church-yard, who has written so many little books for children: he called himself their friend; but he was the friend of all mankind. He was no sooner alighted, but he was in haste to be gone; for he was ever on business of the utmost importance, and was at that time actually compiling materials for the history of one Mr Thomas Trip. I immediately recollect this good-natured man's red pimpled face; for he had published for me against the Deuterogamists of the age,

and from him I borrowed a few pieces, to be paid at my return. Leaving the inn therefore, as I was yet but weak, I resolved to return home by easy journeys of ten miles a-day. My health and usual tranquillity were almost restored, and I now condemned that pride which had made me refractory to the hand of correction. Man little knows what calamities are beyond his patience to bear till he tries them; as in ascending the heights of ambition, which look bright from below, every step we rise shews us some new prospect of hidden disappointment; so in our descent to the vale of wretchedness, which, from the summits of pleasure appears dark and gloomy, the busy mind, still attentive to its own amusement, finds something to flatter and surprise it. Still as we descend, the objects appear to brighten, unexpected prospects amuse, and the mental eye becomes adapted to its gloomy situation.

I now proceeded forwards, and had walked about two hours, when I perceived what appeared at a distance like the waggon, which I was resolved to overtake; but when I came up with it, found it to be a strolling company's cart, that was carrying their scenes, and other theatrical furniture, to the next village, where they were to exhibit. The cart was attended only by the person who drove it, and one of the company, as

the rest of the players were to follow the ensuing day. Good company upon the road, says the proverb, is always the shortest cut, I therefore entered into conversation with the poor player; and as I once had some theatrical powers myself, I dissented on such topics with my usual freedom: but as I was pretty much unacquainted with the present state of the stage, I demanded who were the present theatrical writers in vogue, who the Dryden's and Otway's of the day—I fancy, Sir, “cried the player, “few of our modern dramatists would think “themselves much honoured by being com-“pared to the writers you mention. Dry-“den and Rowe's manner, Sir, are quite “out of fashion; our taste has gone back a “whole century, Fletcher, Ben Johnson, “and all the plays of Shakespear, are the “only things that go down”.——“How”, cried I, “is it possible the present age can “be pleased with that antiquated dialect, “that obsolete humour, those over-charged “characters, which abound in the works “you mention?——“Sir”, returned my companion, “the publick think nothing about “dialect, or humour, or character; for that “is none of their busines, they only go “to be amused, and find themselves hap-“py when they can enjoy a pantomime, “under the sanction of Johnson's or Shake-“spear's name”.——“So then, I suppose”,

cried I, "that our modern dramatists are
"rather imitators of Shakespear than of
"nature".—"To say the truth", re-
turned my companion, I don't know that
"they imitate any thing at all; nor indeed
"does the public require it of them: it
"is not the composition of the piece, but
"the number of starts and attitudes that
"may be introduced into it that elicits ap-
"plause. I have known a piece, with not
"one jest in the whole, shrugged into
"popularity, and another saved by the po-
"et's throwing in a fit of the gripes. No,
"Sir, the works of Congreve and Farqu-
"har have too much wit in them for the
"present taste; our modern dialogue is much
"more natural".

By this time the equipage of the strolling
company was arrived at the village, which,
it seems, had been apprised of our approach,
and was come out to gaze at us; for my
companion observed, that strollers always
have more spectators without doors than
within. I did not consider the impropriety
of my being in such company till I saw a
mob gathered about me. I therefore took
shelter, as fast as possible, in the first ale-
house that offered, and being shewn into the
common room, was accosted by a very
well-drest gentleman, who demanded whe-
ther I was the real chaplain of the compa-
ny, or whether it was only to be my masque-

rade character in the play. Upon informing him of the truth, and that I did not belong to the company, he was condescending enough to desire me and the player to partake in a bowl of punch, over which he discussed modern politics with great earnestness and seeming interest. I set him down in my own mind for nothing less than a parliament-man at least; but was almost confirmed in my conjectures, when, upon my asking what there was in the house for supper, he insisted that the player and I should sup with him at his house, with which request, after some intreaties, I was prevailed on to comply.

C H A P. X I X.

*The description of a person discontented with
the present government, and apprehensive
of the loss of our liberties.*

THE house where we were to be entertained, lying at a small distance from the village, our inviter observed, that as the coach was not ready, he would conduct us on foot, and we soon arrived at one of the most magnificent mansions I had seen in the country. The apartment into which we were shewn was perfectly elegant and modern; he went to give orders for supper,

while the player, with a wink, observed that we were perfectly in luck. Our entertainer soon returned, an elegant supper was brought in, two or three ladies, in an easy deshabille, were introduced, and the conversation began with some sprightliness. Politics, however, was the subject on which our entertainer chiefly expatiated; for he asserted that liberty was at once his boast and his terror. After the cloth was removed, he asked me if I had seen the last Monitor, to which replying in the negative, "What, nor the Auditor, I suppose?" cried he. "Neither, Sir", returned I. "That's very strange, very strange", replied my entertainer. "Now, I read all the politics that come out. The daily, the Public, the Ledger, the Chronicle, the London Evening, the Whitehall Evening, the seventeen magazines, and the two reviews; and though they hate each other, I love them all. Liberty, Sir, liberty is the Briton's boast, and by all my coal mines in Cornwall, I reverence its guardians". "Then it is to be hoped", cried I, "you reverence the king". "Yes", returned my entertainer, "when he does what we would have him; but if he goes on as he has done of late, I'll never trouble myself more with his matters. I say nothing; I think only, I could have directed some things better. I don't think there has

» been a sufficient number of advisers : he
» should advise, with every person willing
» to give him advice, and then we should
» have things done in another manner.

» I wish », cried I, « that such intruding
» advisers were fixed in the pillory. It should
» be the duty of honest men to assist the
» weaker side of our constitution, that fa-
» cred power that has for some years been
» every day declining, and losing its due
» share of influence in the state. But these
» ignorants still continue the cry of liberty,
» and if they have any weight basely throw
» it into the subsiding scale ».

» How », cried one of the ladies, « do
» I live to see one so base, so sordid, as to
» be an enemy to liberty, and a defender
» of tyrants? Liberty, that sacred gift of
» Heaven, that glorious privilege of Britons »!

» Can it be possible », cried our entertain-
er, « that there should be any found at pre-
» sent advocates for Slavery? Any who are
» for meanly giving up the privileges of
» Britons? can any, Sir, be so abject »?

» No, Sir », replied I, « I am for liberty,
» that attribute of Gods! Glorious liberty!
» that theme of modern declamation. I
» would have all men kings. I would be
» a king myself. We have all naturally an
» equal right to the throne : we are all
» originally equal. This is my opinion,
» and was once the opinion of a set of ho-

» nest men who were called Levellers.
» They tried to erect themselves into a
» community, where all should be equally
» free. But alas! it would never answer;
» for there were some among them stronger,
» and some more cunning than others, and
» these became masters of the rest; for as
» sure as your groom rides your horses, be-
» cause he is a cunninger animal than they, so
» surely will the animal that is cunninger
» or stronger than he, sit upon his shoulders
» in turn. Since then it is entailed upon
» humanity to submit, and some are born
» to command, and others to obey, the
» question is, as there must be tyrants, whe-
» ther it is better to have them in the same
» house with us, or in the same village, or
» still farther off, in the metropolis. Now,
» Sir, for my own part, as I naturally hate
» the face of a tyrant, the farther off he is
» removed from me, the better pleased am
» I. The generality of mankind also are of
» my way of thinking, and have unanimous-
» ly created one king, whose election at
» once diminishes the number of tyrants,
» and puts tyranny at the greatest distance
» from the greatest number of people. Now
» those who were tyrants themselves before
» the election of one tyrant, are naturally
» averse to a power raised over them, and
» whose weight must ever lean heaviest on
» the subordinate orders. It is the interest

» of the great, therefore, to diminish kingly
» power as much as possible ; because what-
» ever they take from it is naturally restor-
» ed to themselves ; and all they have to do
» in a state, is to undermine the single tyrant,
» by which they resume their primæval au-
» thority. Now a state may be so constitution-
» ally circumstanced, its laws may be so dis-
» posed, and its men of opulence so minded,
» as all to conspire to carry on this business
» of undermining monarchy. If the cir-
» cumstances of the state be such, for in-
» stance, as to favour the accumulation of
» wealth, and make the opulent still more
» rich, this will increase their strength and
» their ambition. But an accumulation of
» wealth must necessarily be the consequence
» in a state, when more riches flow in from
» external commerce, than arise from inter-
» nal industry : for external commerce can
» only be managed to advantage by the
» rich, and they have also at the same time
» all the emoluments arising from internal
» industry : so that the rich, in a such state,
» have two sources of wealth, whereas the
» poor have but one. Thus wealth, in all
» commercial states, is found to accumulate,
» and such have hitherto in time become
» aristocratical. Besides this, the very
» laws of a country may contribute to the
» accumulation of wealth ; as when those
» natural ties that bind the rich and poor

» together are broken, and it is ordained,
» that the rich shall only marry among
» each other; or when the learned are
» held unqualified to serve their country
» as counsellors merely from a defect of
» opulence, and wealth is thus made the
» object of a wise man's ambition; by these
» means I say, and such means as these,
» riches will accumulate. The possessor of
» accumulated wealth, when furnished with
» the necessaries and pleasures of life, can
» employ the superfluity of fortune only
» in purchasing power. That is, different-
» ly speaking, in making dependants, in
» purchasing the liberty of the needy or the
» venal, of men who are willing to bear
» the mortification of contiguous tyranny
» for bread. Thus each very opulent man
» generally gathers round him a circle of
» the poorest of the people; and the polity
» abounding in accumulated wealth, may
» be compared to a Cartesian system, each
» orb with a vortex of its own. Those,
» however, who are willing to move in a
» great man's vortex, are only such as
» must be slaves, the rabble of mankind,
» whose souls and whose education are
» adapted to servitude, and who know no-
» thing of liberty except the name. But
» there must still be a large number of the
» people without the sphere of the opulent
» man's influence, namely, that order of

» men which subsists between the very rich
» and the very rabble ; those men who are
» posseſt of too large fortunes to submit to
» the neighbouring man in power , and yet
» are too poor to set up for tyranny them-
» ſelves . In this middle order of mankind
» are generally to be found all the arts ,
» wisdom , and virtues of ſociety . This
» order alone is known to be the true pre-
» ſerver of freedom , and may be caſtled the
» People . Now it may happen , that this
» middle order of mankind may lose all its
» influence in a ſtate , and its voice be in a
» manner drowned in that of the rabble :
» for if the fortune ſufficient for qualifying
» a perſon at preſent to give his voice in
» ſtate affairs , be ten times leſs than was
» judged ſufficient upon forming the conſti-
» tution , it is evident that greater numbers
» of the rabble will thus be introduced in-
» to the political ſystem , and they ever
» moving in the vortex of the great , will
» follow where greatness ſhall direct . In
» ſuch a ſtate , therefore , all that the mid-
» dle order has left , is to preſerve the pre-
» rogatives , and the privileges of one prin-
» cipal tyrant with the moſt ſacred circum-
» ſpection ; he divides the power of the rich ,
» and calls off the great from falling with
» tenfold weight on the middle order placed
» beneath them . The middle order may be
» compared to a town of which the opulent
» are

» are forming the siege , and which the ty-
» rant is hastening to relieve. While the
» besiegers are in dread of the external
» enemy , it is but natural to offer the townf-
» men the most specious terms ; to flatter
» them with sounds, and amuse them with
» privileges : but if they once defeat the
» tyrant , the walls of the town will be but
» a small defence to its inhabitants. What
» they may then expect , may be seen by
» turning our eyes to Holland, Genoa , or
» Venice , where the laws govern the poor ;
» and the rich govern the law. I am then
» for , and would die for , monarchy , sacred
» monarchy ; for if there be any thing sa-
» cred amongst men , it must be the anoint-
» ed sovereign of his people , and every
» diminution of his power in war , or in
» peace , is an infringement upon the real
» liberties of the subject. The sounds of
» liberty , patriotism , and Britons , have al-
» ready done *much* , it is to be hoped that
» the true sons of freedom will prevent
» their ever doing more. I have known
» many of those bold champions for liberty
» in my time , yet do I not remember one
» that was not in his heart and in his fami-
» ly a tyrant ».

My warmth I found had lengthened this harangue beyond the rules of good breeding : but the impatience of my entertainer , who often strove to interrupt it , could be

restrained no longer. « What ! » cried he ,
« then I have been all this while entertain-
» ing a Jesuit in parson's clothes ; but by
» all the coal mines of Cornwall , out he
» shall pack , if my name be Wilkinson ».
I now found I had gone too far , and asked
pardon for the warmth with which I had
spoken. « Pardon », returned he in a fu-
ry ; « I think such principles demand ten
» thousand pardons . What ! give up up li-
» berty , property , and , as the Gazetteer
» says , lye down to be saddled with wooden
» shoes ! Sir , I insist upon your marching
» out of this house immediately , to prevent
» worse consequences ; Sjr , I insist upon
» it ». I was going to repeat my remon-
strances ; but just then we heard a footman s
rap at the door , and the two ladies cried out ,
« As sure as death there is our master and
» mistress come home ». It seems my en-
tertainer was all this while only the butler ,
who , in his master's absence had a mind
to cut a figure , and be for a while the
gentleman himself ; and to say the truth ,
he talked politics as well as most country
gentlemen do . But nothing could now ex-
ceed my confusion upon seeing the gent-
leman , with his lady , enter , nor was their
surprise , at finding such company and good
cheer , less than ours . « Gentlemen », cried
the real master of the house , to me and
my companion , « I am your most hum-

» ble servant ; but I protest this is so un-
» expected a favour, that I almost sink un-
» der the obligation ». However unexpected
our company might be to him, his, I
am sure, was still more to us, and I was
struck dumb with the apprehensions of my
own absurdity, when whom should I next
see enter the room but my dear Miss Ara-
bella Wilmot, who was formerly designed
to be married to my son George ; but whose
match was broken off, as already related.
As soon as she saw me, she flew to my arms
with the utmost joy. « My dear Sir », cri-
ed she, « to what happy accident is it that
» we owe so unexpected a visit ? I am sure
» my uncle and aunt will be in raptures
» when they find they have the good Dr
» Primrose for their guest ». Upon hear-
ing my name, the old gentleman and lady
very politely stepped up, and welcomed me
with most cordial hospitality. Nor could
they forbear smiling upon being informed
of the nature of the present visit : but the
unfortunate butler, whom they at first seemed
disposed to turn away, was, at my intercession
forgiven.

Mr Arnold and his lady, to whom the
house belonged now, insisted upon having
the pleasure of my stay for some days, and
as their niece, my charming pupil, whose
mind, in some measure, had been formed
under my own instructions, joined in their

intreaties I complied. That night I was shewn to a magnificent chamber, and the next morning early Miss Wilmot desired to walk with me in the garden, which was decorated in the modern manner. After some time spent in pointing out the beauties of the place, she inquired with seeming unconcern, when last I had heard from my son George. « Alas ! Madam », cried I, « he has now been near three years absent, without ever writing to his friends or me. Where he is I know not; perhaps I shall never see him or happiness more. No, my dear Madam, we shall never more see such pleasing hours as were once spent by our fire-side at Wakefield. My little family are now dispersing very fast, and poverty has brought not only want, but infamy upon us ». The good-natured girl let fall a tear at this account; but as I saw her possessed of too much sensibility, I forbore a more minute detail of our sufferings. It was, however, some consolation to me to find that time had made no alteration in her affections, and that she had rejected several matches that had been made her since our leaving her part of the country. She led me round all the extensive improvements of the place, pointing to the several walks and arbours, and at the same time catching from every object a hint for some new question relative to my son. In

this manner we spent the forenoon, till the bell summoned us into dinner, where we found the manager of the strolling company, who was come to dispose of tickets for the Fair Penitent, which was to be acted that evening, the part of Horatio by a young gentleman who had never appeared on any stage before. He seemed to be very warm in the praises of the new performer, and averred, that he never saw any who bid so fair for excellence. Acting, he observed, was not learned in a day; "But this gentleman", continued he, "seems born to tread the stage. His voice, his figure, and attitudes are all admirable. We caught him up accidentally in our journey down". This account, in some measure, excited our curiosity, and, at the intreaty of the ladies, I was prevailed upon to accompany them to the play-house, which was no other than a barn. As the company with which I went was incontestably the chief of the place, we were, received with the greatest respect, and placed in the front seat of the theatre; where we sat for some time with no small impatience to see Horatio make his appearance. The new performer advanced at last; and I found it was my unfortunate son. He was going to begin, when, turning his eyes upon the audience, he perceived us, and stood at once speechless and immovable. The actors behind

the scene, who ascribed this pause to his natural timidity, attempted to encourage him; but instead of going on, he burst into a flood of tears, and retired off the stage. I don't know what were the sensations I felt; for they succeeded with too much rapidity for description: but I was soon awaked from this disagreeable reverie by Miss Wilmot, who, pale and with a trembling voice, desired me to conduct her back to her uncle's. When got home, Mr Arnold, who was as yet a stranger to our extraordinary behaviour, being informed that the new performer was my son, sent his coach, and an invitation, for him; and as he persisted in his refusal to appear again upon the stage, the players put another in his place, and we soon had him with us. Mr Arnold gave him the kindest reception, and I received him with my usual transport; for I could never counterfeit false resentment. Miss Wilmot's reception was mixed with seeming neglect, and yet I could perceive she acted a studied part. The tumult in her mind seemed not yet abated; she said twenty giddy things that looked like joy, and then laughed loud at her own want of meaning. At intervals she would take a fly peep at the glass, as if happy in the consciousness of unresisting beauty, and often would ask questions, without giving any manner of attention to the answers.

C H A P. X X.

The history of a philosophic vagabond, pursuing novelty, but losing content.

AFTER we had supped, Mrs Arnold politely offered to send a couple of her footmen for my son's baggage, which he at first seemed to decline; but upon her pressing the request, he was obliged to inform her, that a stick and a wallet were all the moveable things upon this earth that he could boast of. "Why, aye, my son", cried I, "you left me but poor, and poor I find you are come back; and yet I make no doubt you have seen a great deal of the world".—Yes, Sir, replied my son, "but travelling after fortune is not the way to secure her; and, indeed, of late, I have desisted from the pursuit".—"I fancy, Sir", cried Mrs Arnold, "that the account of your adventures would be amusing: the first part of them I have often heard from my neice; but could the company prevail for the rest, it would be an additional obligation".—"Madam", replied my son, "I can promise you, the pleasure you have in hearing will not be half so great as my vanity in the recital; and yet in the whole nar-

» tive, I can scarce promise you one adventure, as my account is not of what I did, » but what I saw. The first misfortune of » my life, which you all know, was great; » but though it distrest, it could not sink » me. No person ever had a better knack » at hoping than I. The less kind I found » Fortune then, the more I expected from » her another time, and being now at the » bottom of her wheel, every new revolution might lift, but could not depress me. » I proceeded, therefore, towards London » in a fine morning, no way uneasy about » to-morrow, but cheerful as the birds that » caroll'd by the road. I comforted myself with various reflections, that London » was the true mart where abilities of every » kind were sure of meeting distinction and » reward.

» Upon my arrival in town, Sir, my first » care was to deliver your letter of recommendation to your cousin, who was himself in little better circumstances than » me. My first scheme, you know, Sir, » was to be usher at an academy, and I » asked his advice on the affair. Our cousin » received the proposal with a true Sardonic grin. Aye, cried he, this is a pretty » career, indeed, that has been chalked out » for you. I have been once an usher at a » boarding-school myself; and may I die » by an anodyne necklace, but I had rather

» be an under-turnkey in Newgate. I was
» up early and late : I was brow-beat by
» the master, hated for my ugly face by the
» mistress, worried by the boys within, and
» never permitted to stir our to meet civi-
» lity abroad. But are you sure you are
» fit for a school? Let me examine you a
» little. Have you been bred apprentice to
» the busines? No. Then you won't do
» for a school. Can you dress the boys'
» hair? No. Then you won't do for a
» school. Have you had the small-pox?
» No. Then you won't do for a school.
u Can you lye three in a bed? No. Then
» you will never do for a school. Have
» you got a good stomach? Yes. Then you
» will by no means do for a school. No,
» Sir, if you are for a genteel easy profes-
» sion, bind yourself seven years as an ap-
» prentice to turn a cutler's wheel; but
» avoid a school by any means. But come,
» continued he, I see you are a lad of spi-
» rit and some learning, what do you think
» of commencing author, like me? You have
» read in books, no doubt, of men of ge-
» nius starving at the trade: but at present
» I'll shew you forty very dull fellows
» about town that live by it in opulence;
» all honest jogg trotmen, who go on smoothly
» and dully, and write history and politics,
» and are praised; and who, had they been
» bred coblers, would all their lives have

"only mended shoes, but never made
them.

"Finding that there was no great degree
of gentility affixed to the character of an
ussher, I resolved to accept his proposal;
and having the highest respect for litera-
ture, I hailed the *antiqua mater* of Grub-
street with reverence. I thought it my
glory to pursue a track which Dryden
and Otway trod before me. In fact, I
considered the goddess of this region as
the parent of excellence; and however
an intercourse with the world might give
us good sense, the poverty she granted
was the nurse of genius. Big with these
reflections, I sat down, and finding that
the best things remained to be said on the
wrong side, I resolved to write a book
that should be wholly new. I therefore
drest up three paradoxes with some in-
genuity. They were false, indeed, but
they were new. The jewels of truth
have been so often imported by others,
that nothing was left for me to import
but some splendid things that at a distance
looked every bit as well. Witness, ye
Powers, what fancied importance sat
perched upon my quill while I was wri-
ting. The whole learned world, I made
no doubt, would rise to oppose my sys-
tems, but then I was prepared to oppose
the whole learned world. Like the por-

"cupine, I sat self-collected, with a quill
pointed against every opposer".

"Well said, my boy", cried I, "and
what subject did you treat upon? I hope
you did not pass over the importance of
Hierachal monogamy. But I interrupt,
go on; you published your paradoxes;
well, and what did the learned world say
to your paradoxes?"

"Sir", replied my son, "the learned
world said nothing to my paradoxes; no-
thing at all, Sir. Every man of them
was employed in praising his friends and
himself, or condemning his enemies; and
unfortunately, as I had neither, I suffered
the cruellest mortification, Neglect."

"As I was meditating one day in a cof-
fee-house on the fate of my paradoxes, a
little man happening to enter the room,
placed himself in the box before me,
and after some preliminary discourse,
finding me to be a scholar, drew out a
bundle of proposals, begging me to sub-
scribe to a new edition he was going to
give the world of Propertius, with notes.
This demand necessarily produced a re-
ply that I had no money; and that con-
cession led him on to inquire into the na-
ture of my expectations. Finding that my
expectations were just as great as my purse,
I see, cried he, you are unacquainted
with the town, I'll teach you a part of

» it. Look at these proposals , upon these
» very proposals I have subsisted very com-
» fortably for twelve years. The moment
» a Nobleman returns from his travels , a
» Creolian arrives from Jamaica , or a Dow-
» ager from her country-seat , I strike for
» a subscription. I first besiege their hearts
» with flattery , and then pour in my pro-
» posals at the breach. If they subscribe
» readily the first time , I renew my request
» to beg a dedication-fee. If they let me
» have that , I smite them once more for
» engraving their coat of arms at the top.
» Thus , continued he , I live by vanity ,
» and laugh at it. But between ourselves ,
» I am now too well known , I should be
» glad to borrow your face a bit : a noble-
» man of distinction has just returned from
» Italy ; my face is familiar to his porter ;
» but if you bring this copy of verses , my
» life for it you succeed , and we divide
» the spoil ».

“ Bless us , George ” , cried I , “ and is
» that the employment of poets now ! Do
» men of their exalted talents thus stoop
» to beggary ! Can they so far disgrace their
» calling , as to make a vile traffic of praise
» for bread ? ”.

“ O no , Sir ” , returned he , “ a true po-
» et can never be so base ; for wherever
» there is genius there is pride. The crea-
» tures I now describe are only beggars in

» rhyme. The real poet, as he braves
» every hardship for fame, so he is equally
» a coward to contempt, and none but those
» who are unworthy protection condescend
» to solicit it.

» Having a mind too proud to stoop to
» such indignities, and yet a fortune too
» humble to hazard a second attempt for
» fame, I was now obliged to take a mid-
» dle course, and write for bread. But I
» was unqualified for a profession where
» mere industry alone could insure success.
» I could not suppress my lurking passion
» for applause; but usually consumed that
» time in efforts after excellence, which takes
» up but little room, when it should have
» been more advantageously employed in
» the diffusive productions of fruitful me-
» diocrity. My little piece would come
» forth in the mist of periodical publication
» unnoticed and unknown. The public were
» more importantly employed, than to
» observe the easy simplicity of my stile,
» or the harmony of my periods. Sheet
» after sheet was thrown off to oblivion.
» My essays were buried among the essays
» upon liberty, eastern tales, and cures
» for the bite of a mad dog; while Philau-
» tos, Philalethes, Philelutheros, and Phi-
» lanthropos, all wrote better, because they
» wrote faster, than I.

» Now, therefore, I began to associate

» with none but disappointed authors, like
» myself, who praised, deplored, and de-
» spised each other. The satisfaction we
» found in every celebrated writer's at-
» tempts, was inversely as their merits. I
» found that no genius in another could
» please me. My unfortunate paradoxes had
» entirely dried up that source of comfort.
» I could neither read nor write with sa-
» tisfaction; for excellence in another was
» my aversion, and writing was my trade.

» In the midst of these gloomy reflections,
» as I was one day sitting on a bench in St
» James's park, a young gentleman of dis-
» tinction, who had been my intimate ac-
» quaintance at the university, approached
» me. We saluted each other with some
» hesitation: he almost ashamed of being
» known to one who made so shabby an
» appearance, and I afraid of a repulse. But
» my suspicions soon vanished; for Ned
» Thornhill was at the bottom a very good-
» natured fellow ».

« What did you say, George? » interrupted I. « Thornhill! was not that his
» name? It can certainly be no other than
» my landlord ».——“Bless me”, cried
Mrs Arnold, “is Mr Thornhill so near
» a neighbour of yours? He has long been
» a friend in our family, and we expect a
» visit from him shortly ».

“My friend's first care», continued my

son, " was to alter my appearance by a
" very fine suit of his own cloaths, and
" then I was admitted to his table upon the
" footing of half - friend , half - underling.
" My busines was to attend him at auc-
" tions, to put him in spirits when he sat
" for his picture , to take the left hand in
" his chariot, when not filled by another,
" and to assist at tattering a kip, as the
" phrase was , when we had a mind for a
" frolic. Beside this , I had twenty other little
" employments in the family. I was to do
" many small things without bidding ; to
" carry the cork-screw ; to stand godfather
" to all the butler's children ; to sing when
" I was bid ; to be never out of humour ;
" always to be humble, and , if I could , to
" be happy.

" In this honourable post , however , I
" was not without a rival. A captain of
" marines , who seemed formed for the place
" by nature , opposed me in my patron's
" affections. His mother had been laun-
" dress to a man of quality , and thus he
" early acquired a taste for pimping and
" pedigree. As this gentleman made it the
" study of his life to be acquainted with
" lords , though he was dismissed from seve-
" ral for his stupidity ; yet he found many
" of them who permitted his assiduities , be-
" ing as dull as himself. As flattery was
" his trade , he practised it with the easiest

» address imaginable ; but it came aukward
» and stiff from me ; and as every day my
» patron's desire of flattery increased , so
» every hour being better acquainted with
» his defects I became more unwilling to
» give it . Thus I was once more fairly go-
» ing to give up the field to the captain , when
» my friend found occasion for my assistance .
» This was nothing less than to fight a duel
» for him , with a gentleman whose sister it
» was pretended he had used ill . I readily
» complied with his request , and tho' I
» see you are displeased at my conduct , yet
» as it was a debt indispensably due to
» friendship , I could not refuse . I under-
» took the affair , disarmed my antagonist ,
» and soon after had the pleasure of finding
» that the lady was only a woman of the
» town , and the fellow her bully and a
» sharper . This piece of service was re-
» paid with the warmest professions of gra-
» titude ; but as my friend was to leave
» town in a few days , he knew no other
» method to serve me , but by recommend-
» ing me to his uncle Sir William Thornhill ,
» and another nobleman of great distinc-
» tion , who enjoyed a post under the go-
» vernment . When he was gone , my first
» care was to carry his recommendatory
» letter to his uncle , a man whose charac-
» ter for every virtue was universal , yet
» just . I was received by his servants with

» the most hospitable smiles; for the looks
» of the domestics ever transmit their mas-
ter's benevolence. Being shewn into a
» grand apartment, where Sir William soon
» came to me, I delivered my message and
» letter, which he read, and after pausing
» some minutes, Pray, Sir, cried he, in-
» form me what you have done for my kins-
» man, to deserve this warm recommenda-
» tion? But I suppose, Sir, I guess at your
» merits, you have fought for him; and so
» you would expect a reward from me, for
» being the instrument of his vices. I wish,
» sincerely wish, that my present refusal
» may be some punishment for your guilt;
» but still more, that it may be some in-
» duement to your repentance.—The se-
» verity of this rebuke I bore patiently,
» because I knew it was just. My whole
» expectations now, therefore, lay in my
» letter to the great man. As the doors
» of the nobility are almost ever beset with
» beggars, all ready to thrust in some fly
» petition, I found it no easy matter to
» gain admittance. However, after brib-
» ing the servants with half my worldly
» fortune, I was at last shewn into a spaci-
» ous apartment, my letter being previous-
» ly sent up for his Lordship's inspection.
» During this anxious interval I had full
» time to look round me. Every thing
» was grand, and of happy contrivance:

» the paintings , the furniture , the gildings ,
» petrified me with awe , and raised my idea
» of the owner. Ah , thought I to myself ,
» how very great must the possessor of all
» these things be , who carries in his head
» the business of the state , and whose house
» displays half the wealth of a kingdom :
» sure his genius must be unfathomable !
» During these awful reflections I heard a
» step come heavily forward. Ah , this is
» the great man himself ! No , it was only
» a chambermaid. Another foot was heard
» soon after. This must be He ! No , it
» was only the great man's *valet de cham-*
» *bre*. At last his Lordship actually made
» his appearance. Are you , cried he , the
» bearer of this here letter ? I answered
» with a bow. I learn by this , continued
» he , as how that — But just at that in-
» stant a servant delivered him a card , and
» without taking farther notice , he went
» out of the room , and left me to digest
» my own happiness at leisure. I saw no
» more of him , till told by a footman that
» his Lordship was going to his coach
» at the door. Down I immediately fol-
» lowed , and joined my voice to that of
» three or four more , who came , like me ,
» to petition for favours. His Lordship ,
» however , went too fast for us , and was
» gaining his chariot door with large strides ,
» when I hallooed out to know if I was to

» have any reply. He was by this time got
» in, and muttered an answer, half of which
» only I heard, the other half was lost in
» the rattling of his chariot wheels. I stood
» for some time with my neck stretched out,
» in the posture of one that was listening
» to catch the glorious sounds, till looking
» round me, I found myself alone at his
» Lordship's gate.

» My patience », continued my son, « was
» now quite exhausted : stung with the
» thousand indignities I had met with, I
» was willing to cast myself away, and only
» wanted the gulph to receive me. I re-
» garded myself as one of those vile things
» that nature designed should be thrown by
» into her lumber - room, there to perish
» in unpitied obscurity. I had still, however,
» half a guinea left, and of that I thought
» Fortune herself should not deprive me :
» but in order to be sure of this, I was
» resolved to go instantly and spend it while
» I had it, and then trust to occurrences for
» the rest. As I was going along with this
» resolution, it happened that Mr Cripe's
» office seemed invitingly open to give me a
» welcome reception. In this office Mr Cripe
» kindly offers all his majesty's subjects a
» generous promise of 30 l. a year, for which
» promise all they give in return is their
» liberty for life, and permission to let him
» transport them to America as slaves. I was

» happy at finding a place where I could lose
» my fears in desperation, and therefore enter-
» ed this cell; for it had the appearance of
» one, being dark, damp, and dirty. Here
» I found a number of poor creatures, all
» in circumstances like myself, expecting
» the arrival of Mr Cripe, presenting a
» true epitome of English impatience. Each
» untractable soul at variance with For-
» tune, wreaked her injuries on their own
» hearts: but Mr Cripe at last came down,
» and all our murmurs were hushed. He
» deigned to regard me with an air of pecu-
» liar approbation, and indeed he was the
» first man who for a month past talked to
» me with smiles. After a few questions,
» he found I was fit for every thing in the
» world. He paused a while upon the pro-
» perest means of providing for me, and
» slapping his forehead, as if he had found
» it, assured me, that there was at that
» time an embassy talked of from the synod
» of Pennsylvania to the Chickasaw Indians,
» and that he would use his interest to get
» me made secretary. I knew in my own
» heart that the fellow lied, and yet his
» promise gave me pleasure, there was
» something so magnificent in the sound.
» I fairly, therefore, divided my half
» guinea, one half of which went to be ad-
» ded to his thirty thousand pounds, and
» with the other half I resolved to go to

» the next tavern, to be there more happy than he.

» As I was going out with that resolution, I was met at the door by the captain » of a ship, with whom I had formerly some » little acquaintance, and he agreed to be » my companion over a bowl of punch. As » I never chose to make a secret of my circumstances, he assured me that I was » upon the very point of ruin, in listening » to the office-keeper's promises; for that » he only designed to sell me to the plantations. But, continued he, I fancy you » might, by a much shorter voyage, be very easily put into a genteel way of » bread. Take my advice. My ship sails » to-morrow for Amsterdam; what if you » go in her as a passenger? The moment » you land all you have to do is to teach » the Dutchmen English, and I'll warrant » you'll get pupils and money enough. I » suppose you understand English, added » he, by this time, or the deuce is in it. I » confidently assured him of that; but expressed a doubt whether the Dutch would » be willing to learn English. He affirmed » with an oath that they were fond of it to » distraction; and upon that affirmation I » agreed with his proposal, and embarked » the next day to teach the Dutch English » in Holland. The wind was fair, our voyage short, and after having paid my pas-

» sage with half my moveables, I found my.
» self, fallen as if from the skies, a stranger
» in one of the principal streets of Amster-
» dam. In this situation I was unwilling
» to let any time pass unemployed in teach-
» ing; I addressed myself therefore to two
» or three of those I met, whose appear-
» ance seemed most promising; but it was
» impossible to make ourselves mutually un-
» derstood. It was not till this very mo-
» ment I recollect ed, that in order to teach
» Dutchmen English, it was necessary that
» they should first teach me Dutch. How
» I came to overlook so obvious an objec-
» tion, is to me amazing; but certain it is
» I overlooked it.

» This scheme thus blown up, I had some
» thoughts of fairly shipping back to Eng-
» land again; but happening into company
» with an Irish student, who was returning
» from Louvain, our conversation turning
» upon topics of litterature, (for by the
» way it may be observed, that I always
» forgot the meanness of my circumstances
» when I could converse upon such subjects)
» from him I learned that there were not
» two men in his whole university who un-
» derstood Greek. This amazed me. I im-
» stantly resolved to travel to Louvain; and
» there live by teaching Greek; and in
» this design I was heartened by my bro-
» ther student, who threw out some hints
» that a fortune might be got by it.

» I set boldly forward the next morning.
» Every day lessened the burthen of my
» moveables, like Æsop and his basket of
» bread; for I paid them for my lodgings
» to the Dutch as I travelled on. When I
» came to Louvain, I was resolved not to
» go sneaking to the lower professors, but
» openly tendered my talents to the princi-
» pal himself. I went, had admittance, and
» offered him my service as a master of the
» Greek language, which I had been told
» was a desideratum in his university. The
» Principal seemed at first to doubt of my
» abilities; but of these I offered to con-
» vince him, by turning a part of any
» Greek author he should fix upon into La-
» tin. Finding me perfectly earnest in my
» proposal, he addressed me thus: You see
» me, young man, continued he, I never
» learned Greek, and I don't find that I
» ever missed it. I have had a doctor's cap
» and gown without Greek: I have ten
» thousand florins a year without Greek;
» and I eat heartily without Greek. In
» short, continued he, I don't know Greek,
» and I do not believe there is any use in
» it.

» I was now too far from home to think
» of returning: so I resolved to go forward.
» I had some knowledge of music, with a
» tolerable voice, and now turned what
» was once my amusement into a present

» means of bare subsistence. I passed among
» the harmless peasants of Flanders, and
» among such of the French as were poor
» enough to be very merry; for I ever
» found them sprightly in proportion to
» their wants. Whenever I approached a
» peasant's house towards night-fall, I play-
» ed one of my most merry tunes, and that
» procured me not only a lodging, but subsis-
» tence for the next day. I once or twice
» attempted to play for people of fashion;
» but they still thought my performance
» odious, and never rewarded me even
» with a trifle. This was to me the more
» extraordinary, as whenever I used for-
» merly to play for company, when play-
» ing was my amusement, my music ne-
» ver failed to throw them into raptures
» and the ladies especially; but as it was
» now my only means, it was received with
» contempt: a proof how ready the world
» is to under-rate those talents which a man
» lives by.

» In this manner I proceeded to Paris,
» with no design but just to look about me,
» and then to go forward. The people of
» Paris are much fonder of strangers that
» have money, than of those that have wit.
» You may imagine then, as I could not
» boast much of either, that I was no great
» favourite. After I had walked about the
» town four or five days, and seen the out-

» sides

» sides of the best houses, I was preparing
» to leave this retreat of venal hospitality,
» when passing through one of the princi-
» pal streets, whom should I meet but our
» cousin, to whom you first recommended
» me. This meeting was very agreeable
» to me, and I believe not displeasing to
» him. He inquired into the nature of my
» journey to Paris, and informed me of his
» business there, which was to collect pic-
» tures, medals, intaglios, and antiques of
» all kinds, for a gentleman in London,
» who had just stept into taste and a large
» fortune. I was still more surprised at
» seeing our cousin pitched upon for this
» office, as himself had often assured me he
» knew nothing of the matter. Upon my
» asking how he had been taught the art of
» a *connoscento* so very suddenly, he as-
» sured me that nothing was more easy.
» The whole secret consisted in a strict ad-
» herence to two rules: the one always to
» observe, that the picture might have been
» better if the painter had taken more pains;
» and the other, to praise the works of
» Pietro Perugeno. But, says he, as I once
» taught you how to be an author in London,
» I'll now undertake to instruct you in the
» art of picture-buying at Paris.

» With this proposal I very readily clo-
» sed, as it was a living, and now all my
» ambition was to live. I went therefore

» to his lodgings, improved my dress by his
» assistance, and after some time, accompa-
» nied him to auctions of pictures, where
» the English gentry were expected to be
» purchasers. I was not a little surprised
» at his intimacy with people of the best
» fashion, who referred themselves to his
» judgment upon every picture or medal,
» as to an unerring standard of taste. He
» made very good use of my assistance upon
» these occasions: for when asked his opini-
» on, he would gravely take me aside, and
» ask mine, shrug, look wise, return, and
» assure the company, that he could give
» no opinion upon an affair of such import-
» ance. Yet there was sometimes an oc-
» casion for a more supported assurance. I
» remember to have seen him, after giving
» his opinion that the colouring of a pic-
» ture was not mellow enough, very deli-
» berately take a brush with brown varnish
» that was accidentally lying in the place,
» and rub it over the piece with great com-
» posure before all the company, and then
» ask if he had not improved the tints.

» When he had finished his commission
» in Paris, he left me strongly recommended
» to several men of distinction, as a person
» very proper for a travelling tutor; and I
» was after some time employed in that ca-
» pacity by a gentleman who brought his
» ward to Paris, in order to set him for-

ward on his tour through Europe. I was
to be the young gentleman's governor,
with this injunction, that he should always
be permitted to direct himself. My pupil
in fact understood the art of guiding in
money-concerns much better than I. He
was heir to a fortune of about two hun-
dred thousand pounds, left him by an un-
cle in the West-Indies; and his guardians,
to qualify him for the management of it,
had bound him apprentice to an attorney.
Thus avarice was his prevailing passion:
all his questions on the road were how
money might be saved; which was the
least expensive course of travel; whether
any thing could be bought that would
turn to account when disposed of again
in London. Such curiosities on the way
as could be seen for nothing he was ready
enough to look at; but if the sight was
to be paid for, he usually asserted that he
had been told it was not worth seeing.
He never paid a bill, that he would not
observe, how amazingly expensive travel-
ling was, and all this though he was not
yet come to the age of twentyone. When
arrived at Leghona, as we took a walk
to look at the port and shipping, he
inquired the expence of the passage by
sea home to England. This he was informed
was but a trifle, compared to his returning
by land, he was therefore unable to

» withstand the temptation ; so paying me
» the small part of my salary that was then
» due , he took leave , and embarked with
» only one attendant for London.

» I now therefore was left once more
» upon the world at large , but then it was
» a thing I was used to. However , my skill
» in music could avail me nothing in a coun-
» try were every peasant was a better mu-
» sician than I ; but by this time I had ac-
» quired another talent , which answered
» my purpose as well , and this was a skill
» in disputation. In all the foreign univer-
» sities and convents , there are upon cer-
» tain days philosophical theses maintained
» against every adventitious disputant ; for
» which , if the champion opposes with any
» dexterity , he can claim a gratuity in mo-
» ney , a dinner , and a bed for one night.
» In this manner therefore I fought my way
» towards England , walked along from city
» to city , examined mankind more nearly ,
» and , if I may so express it , saw both sides
» of the picture. My remarks , however ,
» were few : I found that monarchy was
» the best government for the poor to live
» in , and common - wealths for the rich.
» I found that riches in general were in
» every country another name for freedom ;
» and that no man is so fond of freedom
» himself that he would not chuse to subject the
» will of some individuals of society to his own;

Upon my arrival in England, I resolved to pay my respects first to you, and then to enlist as a volunteer in the first expedition that was sent out; but on my journey down my resolutions were changed, by meeting an old acquaintance, who I found belonged to a company of comedians, that were going to make a summer campaign in the country. The company seemed not much to disapprove of me for an associate. They all, however, apprized me of the importance of the task at which I aimed; that the public was a many-headed monster, and that only such as had very good heads could please it: that acting was not to be learnt in a day; and that without some traditional shrugs, which had been on the stage, and only on the stage, these hundred years, I could never pretend to please. The next difficulty was in fitting me with parts, as almost every character was in keeping. I was driven, for some time, from one character to another, till at last Horatio was fixed upon, which the presence of the present company happily hindered me from acting.

CHAP. XXI.

*The short continuance of friendship amongst
the vicious, which is coeval only with mutual
satisfaction.*

My son's account was too long to be delivered at once; the first part of it was begun that night, and he was concluding the rest after dinner the next day, when the appearance of Mr Thornhill's equipage at the door seemed to make a pause in the general satisfaction. The butler, who was now become my friend in the family, informed me with a whisper, that the 'Squire had already made some overtures to Miss Wilmot, and that her aunt and uncle seemed highly to approve the match. Upon Mr Thornhill's entering, he seemed, at seeing my son and me, to start back; but I readily imputed that to surprize, and not displeasure. However, upon our advancing to salute him, he returned our greeting with the most apparent candour; and after a short time, his presence seemed only to increase the general good humour.

After tea he called me aside, to inquire after my daughter; but upon my informing him that my inquiry was unsuccessful, he seemed greatly surprised; adding, that he

had been since frequently at my house, in order to comfort the rest of my family, whom he left perfectly well. He then asked if I had communicated her misfortune to Miss Willmot, or my son; and upon my replying that I had not told them as yet, he greatly approved my prudence and precaution, desiring me by all means to keep it a secret: « For at best », cried he, « it is but » divulging one's own infamy; and per- »haps Miss Livy may not be so guilty as » we all imagine ». We were here inter- rupted by a servant, who came to ask the 'Squire in, to stand up at country dances; so that he left me quite pleased with the interest he seemed to take in my concerns. His addresses, however, to Miss Wilmot, were too obvious to be mistaken; and yet she seemed not perfectly pleased, but bore them rather in compliance to the will of her aunt, than from real inclination. I had even the satisfaction to see her lavish some kind looks upon my unfortunate son, which the other could neither extort by his fortune nor assiduity. Mr Thornhill's seeming composure, however, not a little surprised me: we had now continued here a week, at the pressing instances of Mr Arnold; but each day the more tenderness Miss Wilmot shewed my son, Mr Thornhill's friendship seemed proportionably to increase for him.

He had formerly made us the most kind assurances of using his interest to serve the family; but now his generosity was not confined to promises alone: the morning I designed for my departure, Mr Thornhill came to me with looks of real pleasure to inform me of a piece of service he had done for his friend George. This was nothing less than his having procured him an ensign's commission in one of the regiments that was going to the West-Indies, for which he had promised but one hundred pounds, his interest having been sufficient to get an abatement of the other two. « As for this trifling piece of service », continued the young gentleman, « I desire no other reward but the pleasure of having served my friend; and as for the hundred pounds to be paid, if you are unable to raise it yourselves, I will advance it, and you shall repay me at your leisure ». This was a favour we wanted words to express our sense of: I readily therefore gave my bond for the money, and testified as much gratitude as if I never intended to pay.

George was to depart for town the next day to secure his commission, in pursuance of his generous patron's directions, who judged it highly expedient to use dispatch, lest in the mean time another should step in with more advantageous proposals. The next morning, therefore, our young soldier

was early prepared for his departure, and seemed the only person among us that was not affected by it. Neither the fatigues and dangers he was going to encounter, nor the friends and mistrels, for Miss Wilmot actually loved him, he was leaving behind, any way damped his spirits. After he had taken leave of the rest of the company, I gave him all I had, my blessing. « And now, » my boy », cried I, « thou art going to » fight for thy country, remember how » thy brave grandfather fought for his sa- » cred king, when loyalty among Britons » was a virtue. Go, my boy, and imitate » him in all but his misfortunes, if it was » a misfortune to die with Lord Falkland. » Go, my boy, and if you fall, tho' distant, » exposed and unwept by those that love » you, the most precious tears are those » with which heaven bedews the unburied » head of a soldier ».

The next morning I took leave of the good family, that had been kind enough to entertain me so long, not without several expressions of gratitude to Mr Thornhill for his late bounty. I left them in the enjoyment of all that happiness which affluence and good-breeding procure, and returned towards home, despairing of ever finding my daughter more, but sending a sigh to heaven to spare and to forgive her. I was now come within about twenty miles

of home, having hired an horse to carry me, as I was yet but weak, and comforted myself with the hopes of soon seeing all I held dearest upon earth. But the night coming on, I put up at a little public-house by the road-side, and asked for the landlord's company over a pint of wine. We sat beside his kitchen-fire, which was the best room in the house, and chatted on politics and the news of the country. We happened, among other topics, to talk of young Squire Thornhill, whom the host assured me was hated as much as an uncle of his, who sometimes came down to the country, was loved. He went on to observe, that he made it his whole study to betray the daughters of such as received him to their houses, and after a fortnight or three weeks possession, he turned them out unrewarded and abandoned to the world. As we continued our discourse in this manner, his wife, who had been out to get change, returned, and perceiving that her husband was enjoying a pleasure in which she was not a sharer, she asked him, in an angry tone, what he did there? to which he only replied in an ironical way, by drinking her health. "Mr Symmonds", cried she, "you use me very ill, and I'll bear it no longer. Here three parts of the business is left for me to do, and the fourth left unfinished; while you do nothing but soak with the guests all day

» long, whereas if a spoonful of liquor
» were to cure me of a fever, I never touch
» a drop ». I now found what she would
be at , and immediately poured her out a
glass, which she received with a curtsey,
and drinking towards my good health ;
« Sir », resumed she , « it is not so much for
» the value of the liquor I am angry , but
» one cannot help it , when the house is
» going out of the windows. If the cus-
tomers or guests are to be dunned, all
» the burthen lyes upon my back , he'd as
» lief eat that glass as budge after them
» himself. There now above stairs , we
» have a young woman who has come to
» take up her lodgings here , and I don't
» believe she has got any money by her
» over-civility. I am certain she is very
» slow of payment , and I wish she were
» put in mind of it ».——« What signifies
» minding her », cried the host , « if she be
» slow , she is sure ».——« I don't know
» that », replied the wife ; « but I know
» that I am sure she has been here a fort-
» night , and we have not seen the cross of
» her money ».—« I suppose , my dear »,
cried he , « we shall have it all in a lump »
—« In a lump »! cried the other , « I hope
» we may get it any way ; and that I am
» resolved we shall this very night , or out
» she tramps , bag and baggage ».—« Consider
» my dear », cried the husband , « she is a gen-

» tlewoman, and deserves more respect"—
" As for the matter of that ", returned the
hostess, " gentle or simple, out she shall
» pack with a sassarara. Gentry may be
» good things where they take ; but for
» my part I never saw much good of them
» at the sign of the Harrow".—Thus say-
ing, she ran up a narrow flight of stairs ,
that went from the kitchen to a room over-
head , and I soon perceived by the loudness
of her voice , and the bitterness of her re-
proaches , that no money was to be had
from her lodger. I could hear her remon-
strances very distinctly : " Out, I say , pack
» out this moment , tramp , thou infamous
» strumpet , or I'll give thee a mark thou
» won't be the better for this three months.
» What ! you trumpery , to come and take
» up an honest house , without cross or coin
» to bless yourself with ; come along , I
» say ".—" O dear Madam ", cried the stran-
ger , " pity me ; pity a poor abandoned
» creature for one night , and death will
» soon do the rest ".—I instantly knew the
voice of my poor ruined child Olivia. I
flew to her rescue , while the woman was
dragging her along by the hair , and caught
the dear forlorn wretch in my arms.—
" Welcome , any way welcome , my dearest
» lost one , my treasure , to your poor old
» father's bosom. Tho' the vicious forsake
» thee , there is yet one in the world that

" will never forsake thee; tho' thou hadst
" ten thousand crimes to answer for, he will
" forget them all".—"O my own dear"—for
minutes she could no more—"my own
dearest good Papa! Could angels be kind-
er! How do I deserve so much! The
villain, I hate him and myself, to be a
reproach to such goodness. You can't
forgive me. I know you cannot".—

" Yes, my child, from my heart I do for-
give thee! Only repent, and we both
shall yet be happy. We shall see many
pleasant days yet, my Olivia".—"Ah!
never, Sir, never. The rest of my wretch-
ed life must be infamy abroad, and shame
at home. But, alas! Papa, you look much
paler than you used to do. Could such
a thing as I am give you so much uneasi-
ness? Sure you have too much wisdom
to take the miseries of my guilt upon
yourself".—"Our wisdom, young wo-
man", replied I—"Ah, why so cold a
name, Papa"? cried she. "This is the
first time you ever called me by so cold
a name".—"I ask pardon, my darling",
returned I; "but I was going to observe,
that wisdom makes but a slow defence against
trouble, though at last a sure one".

The landlady now returned to know if
we did not chuse a more genteel apartment,
to which assenting, we were shewn a room,
where we could converse more freely. Af-

ter we had talked ourselves into some degree of tranquillity, I could not avoid desiring some account of the gradations that led to her present wretched situation. "That villain, Sir", said she, "from the first day of our meeting made me honourable, though private proposals".

"Villain indeed", cried I; "and yet it in some measure surprizes me, how a person of Mr Burchell's good sense and seeming honour could be guilty of such deliberate baseness, and thus step into a family to undo it".

"My dear Papa", returned my daughter, "you labour under a strange mistake: Mr Burchell never attempted to deceive me. Instead of that he took every opportunity of privately admonishing me against the artifices of Mr Thornhill, who now I find was even worse than he represented him".—"Mr Thornhill", interrupted I, "can it be"?—"Yes, Sir", returned she, "it was Mr Thornhill who seduced me, who employed the two ladies as he called them, but who, in fact, were abandoned women of the town, without breeding or pity, to decoy us up to London. Their artifices, you may remember, would have certainly succeeded, but for Mr Burchell's letter, who directed those approaches at them which we all applied to ourselves. How he came to have so

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» much influence as to defeat their intentions, still remains a secret to me; but » I am convinced he was ever our warmest » sincerest friend ».

« You amaze me, my dear », cried I ; » but now I find my first suspicions of Mr » Thornhill's baseness were too well ground- » ed : but he can triumph in security ; for » he is rich and we are poor. But tell me, » my child, sure it was no small temptation » that could thus obliterate all the impres- » sions of such an education, and so virtu- » ous a disposition as thine ».

« Indeed, Sir », replied she, « he owes » all his triumph to the desire I had of » making him, and not myself, happy. I » knew that the ceremony of our marriage » which was privately performed by a po- » pish priest, was no way binding, and that » I had nothing to trust to but his honour ». » What », interrupted I, « and were you in- » deed married by a priest, and in orders » ? — « Indeed, Sir, we were », replied she, » though we were both sworn to conceal » his name ». — « Why then, my child, come » to my arms again, and now you are a » thousand times more welcome than be- » fore ; for you are now his wife to all in- » tents and purposes ; nor can all the laws » of man, tho' written upon tables of ada- » mant, lessen the force of that sacred con- » nexion ».

“ Alas, Papa”, replied she, “ you are
” but little acquainted with his villainies:
” he has been married already, by the same
” priest, to six or eight wives more, whom
” like me, he has deceived and abandoned ”.

“ Has he so”? cried I, “ then we must
” hang the priest, and you shall inform a-
” gainst him to-morrow ”.—“ But Sir ”, re-
turned she, “ will that be right, when I am
” sworn to secrecy”?—“ My dear ”, I re-
plied, “ if you have made such a promise,
” I cannot, nor will not, tempt you to
” break it. Even tho’ it may benefit the
” public, you must not inform against him.
” In all human institutions a smaller evil is
” allowed to procure a greater good; as in
” politics, a province may be given away
” to secure a kingdom; in medicine, a limb
” may be lopt off, to preserve the body.
” But in religion the law is written, and
” inflexible, *never* to do evil. And this law,
” my child, is right: for otherwife, if we
” commit a smaller evil, to procure a greater
” good, certain guilt would be thus incurred,
” in expectation of contingent advantage.
” And though the advantage should certainly
” follow, yet the interval between commis-
” sion and advantage, which is allowed to
” be guilty, may be that in which we are
” called away to answer for the things we
” have done, and the volume of human
” actions is closed for ever. But I interrupt
” you, my dear, go on ”.

“ The very next morning ”, continued she, “ I found what little expectations I was to have from his sincerity. That very morning he introduced me to two unhappy women more, whom, like me, he had deceived, but who lived in contented prostitution. I loved him too tenderly to bear such rivals in his affections, and strove to forget my infamy in a tumult of pleasures. With this view, I danced, dressed, and talked; but still was unhappy. The gentlemen who visited there told me every moment of the power of my charms, and this only contributed to increase my melancholy, as I had thrown all their power quite away. Thus each day I grew more pensive, and he more insolent, till at last the monster had the assurance to offer me to a young Baronet of his acquaintance. Need I describe, Sir, how his ingratitude stung me. My answer to this proposal was almost madness. I desired to part. As I was going he offered me a purse; but I flung it at him with indignation, and burst from him in a rage, that for a while kept me insensible of the miseries of my situation. But I soon looked round me, and saw myself a vile, abject, guilty thing, without one friend in the world to apply to.

“ Just in that interval, a stage-coach happening to pass by, I took a place, it

» being my only aim to be driven at a distance from a wretch I despised and detested. I was set down here, where, since my arrival, my own anxiety, and this woman's unkindness, have been my only companions. The hours of pleasure that I have passed with my Mamma and sister, now grow painful to me. Their sorrows are much; but mine is greater than theirs; for mine is guilt and infamy».

“Have patience my child”, cried I, “and I hope things will yet be better. Take some repose to-night, and to-morrow I'll carry you home to your mother, and the rest of the family, from whom you will receive a kind reception. Poor woman, this has gone to her heart: but she loves you still, Olivia, and will forgive it”.

C H A P. X X I I.

Offences are easily pardoned where there is love at bottom.

THE next morning I took my daughter behind me, and set out on my return home. As we travelled along, I strove, by every persuasion, to calm her sorrows and fears, and to arm her with resolution to bear the presence of her offended mother. I took every opportunity, from the prof-

pect of a fine country, through which we passed, to observe how much kinder heaven was to us than we were to each other, and that the misfortunes of nature's making were very few. I assured her, that she should never perceive any change in my affections, and that during my life, which yet might be long, she might depend upon a guardian and an instructor. I armed her against the censures of the world, shewed her that books were sweet unreproaching companions to the miserable, and that if they could not bring us to enjoy life, they would teach us to endure it.

The hired horse that we rode was to be put up that night at an inn by the way, within about five miles from my house, and as I was willing to prepare my family for my daughter's reception, I determined to leave her that night at the inn, and to come for her accompanied by my daughter Sophia, early the next morning. It was night before we reached our appointed stage: however, after seeing her provided with a decent apartment, and having ordered the hostess to prepare proper refreshments, I kissed her, and proceeded towards home. My heart caught new sensations of pleasure the nearer I approached that peaceful mansion. As a bird that has been frightened from its nest, my affections out-went my haste, and hovered round my little fire-side, with

all the rapture of expectation. I called up the many fond things I had to say, and anticipated the welcome I was to receive. I already felt my wife's tender embrace, and smiled at the joy of my little ones. As I walked but slowly, the night waned apace. The labourers of the day were all retired to rest; the lights were out in every cottage; no sounds were heard but of the shrilling cock, and the deep-mouthed watch-dog, at hollow distance. I approached my little abode of pleasure, and before I was within a furlong of the place, our honest mastiff came running to welcome me.

It was now near mid-night that I came to knock at my door: all was still and silent: my heart dilated with unutterable happiness, when, to my amazement, the house was bursting out in a blaze of fire, and every aperture was red with conflagration! I gave a loud convulsive outcry, and fell upon the pavement insensible. This alarmed my son, who perceiving the flames, instantly waked my wife and daughter, and all running out naked, and wild with apprehension, recalled me to life with their anguish. But it was only to objects of new terror; for the flames had, by this time, caught the roof of our dwelling, part after part continuing to fall in, while the family stood, with silent agony, looking on, as if they enjoyed the blaze. I gazed upon

them and upon it by turns, and then looked round me for my two little ones; but they were not to be seen. O misery! « Where », cried I, « where are my little ones »?—« They are burnt to death » in the flames », says my wife calmly, « and I will die with them ».—That moment I heard the cry of the babes within, who were just awaked by the fire, and nothing could have stopped me. « Where, where, are my children »? cried I, rushing thro' the flames, and bursting the door of the chamber in which they were confined, « Where are my little ones »?—« Here, dear Papa, here we are », cried they together, while the flames were just catching the bed where they lay. I caught them both in my arms, and snatched them thro' the fire as fast as possible, while just as I was got out, the roof sunk in. « Now », cried I, holding up my children, « now let the flames burn on, and all my possessions perish. Here they are, I have saved my treasure. Here, my dearest, here are our treasures, and we shall yet be happy ». We kissed our little darlings a thousand times, they clasped us round the neck, and seemed to share our transports, while their mother laughed and wept by turns.

I now stood a calm spectator of the flames, and, after some time, began to per-

ceive that my arm to the shoulder was scorched in a terrible manner. It was therefore out of my power to give my son any assistance, either in attempting to save our goods, or preventing the flames spreading to our corn. By this time, the neighbours were alarmed, and came running to our assistance; but all they could do was to stand, like us, spectators of the calamity. My goods, among which were the notes I had reserved for my daughters fortunes, were entirely consumed, except a box, with some papers, that stood in the kitchen, and two or three things more of little consequence, which my son brought away in the beginning. The neighbours contributed, however, what they could to lighten our distress. They brought us clothes, and furnished one of our out-houses with kitchen utensils; so that by day-light we had another, tho' a wretched, dwelling to retire to. My honest next neighbour, and his children, were not the least assiduous in providing us with every thing necessary, and offering whatever consolation untutored benevolence could suggest.

When the fears of my family had subsided, curiosity to know the cause of my long stay began to take place; having therefore informed them of every particular, I proceeded to prepare them for the reception of our lost one, and tho' we had nothing

but wretchedness now to impart, yet to procure her a welcome to what we had. This task would have been more difficult but for our recent calamity, which had humbled my wife's pride, and blunted it by more poignant afflictions. Being unable to go for my poor child myself, as my arm now grew very painful, I sent my son and daughter, who soon returned, supporting the wretched delinquent, who had not courage to look up at her mother, whom no instructions of mine could persuade to a perfect reconciliation; for women have a much stronger sense of female error than men.

» Ah, Madam », cried her mother, « this is » but a poor place you are come to after » so much finery. My daughter Sophy and » I can afford but little entertainment to » persons who have kept company only » with people of distinction. Yes, Miss » Livy, your poor father and I have suf- » fered very much of late; but I hope He- » ven will forgive you ».—During this re-ception, the unhappy victim stood pale and trembling, unable to weep or to reply; but I could not continue a silent spectator of her distress; wherefore assuming a degree of severity in my voice and manner, which was ever followed with instant submission,

« I intreat, woman, that my words may be » now marked once for all: I have here » brought you back a poor deluded wan-

» derer ; her return to duty demands the
» revival of our tenderness. The real hard-
» ships of life are now coming fast upon us,
» let us not therefore increase them by dis-
» fention among each other. If we live
» harmoniously together, we may yet be
» contented, as there are enough of us here
» to shut out the censuring world, and keep
» each other in countenance. The kind-
» ness of Heaven is promised to the peni-
» tent, and let ours be directed by the ex-
» ample. Heaven, we are assured, is much
» more pleased to view a repentant sinner,
» than many persons who have supported
» a course of undeviating rectitude. And
» this is right; for that single effort by which
» we stop short in the down hill path to
» perdition, is itself a greater exertion of
» virtue, than an hundred acts of justice».

C H A P. X X I I I.

None but the guilty can be long and completely miserable.

SOME assiduity was now required to make our present abode as convenient as possible, and we were soon again qualified to enjoy our former serenity. Being disabled myself from assisting my son in our usual occupations, I read to my family from the few books that were saved, and particularly

ly from such , as , by amusing the imagination , contributed to ease the heart. Our good neighbours too came every day with the kindest condolence , and fixed a time in which they were all to assist at repairing my former dwelling. Honest farmer Williams was not last among these visitors ; but heartily offered his friendship. He would even have renewed his addresses to my daughter ; but she rejected them in such a manner as totally represt his future solicitations. Her grief seemed formed for continuing , and she was the only person of our little society that a week did not restore to chearfulness. She now lost that unblushing innocence which once taught her to respect herself , and to seek pleasure by pleasing. Anxiety now had taken strong possession of her mind , her beauty began to be impaired with her constitution , and neglect still more contributed to diminish it. Every tender epithet , bestowed on her sister , brought a pang to her heart and a tear to her eye ; and as one vice , tho' cured , almost ever plants others where it has been , so her former guilt , tho' driven out by re-tentance , left jealousy and envy behind. I strove a thousand ways to lessen her care , and even forgot my own pain in a concern for her's , collecting such amusing passages of history , as a strong memory and some reading could suggest. « Our happiness ,

» my dear », I would say, « is in the power
» of one who can bring it about a thousand
» unforeseen ways, that mock our fore-
» sight. If example be necessary to prove
» this, I'll give you a story, my child, told
» us by a grave, tho' sometimes a roman-
» cing, historian.

» Matilda was married very young to a
» Neapolitan nobleman of the first quality,
» and found herself a widow and a mother
» at the age of fifteen. As she stood one
» day caressing her infant son in the open
» window of an apartment, which hung
» over the river Volturna, the child, with
» a sudden spring, leaped from her arms into
» the flood below, and disappeared in a
» moment. The mother, struck with instant
» surprize, and making an effort to save
» him, plunged in after; but, far from
» being able to assist the infant, she herself
» with great difficulty escaped to the oppo-
» site shore, just when some French soldiers
» were plundering the country on that side,
» who immediately made her their prisoner.

» As the war was then carried on be-
» tween the French and Italians with the
» utmost inhumanity, they were going at
» once to perpetrate those two extremes,
» suggested by appetite and cruelty. This
» base resolution, however, was opposed by
» a young officer, who, tho' their retreat
» required the utmost expedition, placed

her behind him, and brought her in safety to his native city. Her beauty at first caught his eye, her merit soon after his heart. They were married; he rose to the highest posts; they lived long together, and were happy. But the felicity of a soldier can never be called permanent: after an interval of several years, the troops which he commanded having met with a repulse, he was obliged to take shelter in the city where he had lived with his wife. Here they suffered a siege, and the city at length was taken. Few histories can produce more various instances of cruelty, than those which the French and Italians at that time exercised upon each other. It was resolved by the victors, upon this occasion to put all the French prisoners to death; but particularly the husband of the unfortunate Matilda, as he was principally instrumental in protracting the siege. Their determinations were, in general, executed almost as soon as resolved upon. The captive soldier was led forth, and the executioner, with his sword, stood ready, while the spectators in gloomy silence awaited the fatal blow, which was only suspended till the general, who presided as judge, should give the signal. It was in this interval of anguish and expectation, that Matilda came to take her last farewell of her hus-

» band and deliverer, deplored her wretched situation, and the cruelty of fate, that had saved her from perishing by a premature death in the river Voltturna, to be the spectator of still greater calamities.

» The general, who was a young man, was struck with surprise at her beauty, and pity at her distress; but with still stronger emotions when he heard her mention her former dangers. He was her son, the infant for whom she had encounter'd so much danger. He acknowledged her at once as his mother, and fell at her feet. The rest may be easily supposed: the captive was set free, and all the happiness that love, friendship, and duty could confer on each, were united ».

In this manner I would attempt to amuse my daughter; but she listened with divided attention; for her own misfortunes engrossed all the pity she once had for those of another, and nothing gave her ease. In company she dreaded contempt; and in solitude she only found anxiety. Such was the colour of her wretchedness, when we received certain information, that Mr Thornhill was going to be married to Miss Wilmot, for whom I always suspected he had a real passion, tho' he took every opportunity before me to express his contempt both of her person and fortune. This news only served to increase poor Olivia's afflic-

tion; such a flagrant breach of fidelity, was more than her courage could support. I was resolved, however, to get more certain information, and to defeat, if possible, the completion of his desings, by sending my son to old Mr Wilmot's, with instructions to know the truth of the report, and to deliver Miss Wilmot a letter, intimating Mr Thornhill's conduct in my family. My son went, in pursuance of my directions, and in three days returned, assuring us of the truth of the account; but that he had found it impossible to deliver the letter, which he was therefore obliged to leave, as Mr Thornhill and Miss Wilmot were visiting round the country. They were to be married, he said, in a few days, having appeared together at church the Sunday before he was there, in great splendour, the bride attended by six young ladies drest in white, and he by as many gentlemen. Their approaching nuptials filled the whole country with rejoicing, and they usually rode out together in the grandest equipage that had been seen in the country for many years. All the friends of both families, he said, were there, particularly the Squire's uncle, Sir William Thornhill, who bore so good a character. He added, that nothing but mirth and feasting were going forward; that all the country praised the young bride's beauty, and the bridegroom's fine

person, and that they were immensely fond of each other; concluding, that he could not help thinking Mr Thornhill one of the most happy men in the world.

"Why, let him if he can", returned I:
"but, my son, observe this bed of straw,
"and unsheltering roof; those mouldering
"walls, and humid floor; my wretched body
"thus disabled by fire, and my children
"weeping round me for bread; you have
"come home, my child, to all this, yet
"here, even here, you see a man that
"would nor for a thousand worlds exchange
"situations. O, my children, if you could
"but learn to commune with your own
"hearts, and know what noble company
"you can make them, you would little re-
"gard the elegance and splendours of the
"worthless. Almost all men have been
"taught to call life a passage, and them-
"selves the travellers. The similitude still
"may be improved when we observe that
"the good are joyful and serene, like tra-
"vellers that are going towards home; the
"wicked but by intervals happy, like tra-
"vellers that are going into exile".

My compassion for my poor daughter, overpowered by this new disaster, interrupted what I had farther to observe. I bade her mother support her, and after a short time she recovered. She appeared from this time more calm, and I imagined had

gained a new degree of resolution: but appearances deceived me, for her tranquillity was the languor of over-wrought resentment. A supply of provisions, charitably sent us by my kind parishioners, seemed to diffuse cheerfulness amongst the rest of the family, nor was I displeased at seeing them once more sprightly and at ease. It would have been unjust to damp their satisfactions merely to condole with resolute melancholy, or to burthen them with a sadness they did not feel. Once more, therefore, the tale went round, and the song was demanded, and cheerfulness condescended to hover round our little habitation.

C H A P. X X I V.

Fresh calamities.

THE next morning the sun arose with peculiar warmth for the season; so that we agreed to breakfast together at the honey-suckle bank: where, while we sat, my youngest daughter, at my request, joined her voice to the concert on the trees about us. It was here my poor Olivia first met her seducer, and every object served to recall her sadness. But that melancholy which is excited by objects of pleasure, or inspired by sounds of harmony, soothes the heart instead of corroding it. Her mother too, upon

this occasion, felt a pleasing distress, and wept, and loved her daughter as before, « Do, my pretty Olivia », cried she, « let us have that little melancholy air your Papa was so fond of, your sister Sophy has already obliged us. Do, child, it will please your old father ». She complied in a manner so exquisitely pathetic as moved me:

WHEN lovely woman stoops to folly,
And finds too late that men betray,
What charm can soothe her melancholy,
What art can wash her guilt away?

The only art her guilt to cover,
To hide her shame from every eye,
To give repentance to her lover,
And wring his bosom—is to die.

As she was concluding the last stanza, to which an interruption in her voice from sorrow gave peculiar softness, the appearance of Mr Thornhill's equipage at a distance alarmed us all, but particularly increased the uneasiness of my eldest daughter, who, desirous of shunning her betrayer, returned to the house with her sister. In a few minutes he was alighted from his chariot, and making up to the place where I was still sitting, inquired after my health with his usual air of familiarity. « Sir, » replied I, « your present assurance only

» serves to aggravate the baseness of your
» character ; and there was a time when I
» would have chastised your insolence , for
» presuming thus to appear before me . But
» now you are safe ; for age has cooled my
» passions , and my calling restrains them ».

I vow , my dear Sir » , returned he , « I
» am amazed at all this ; nor can I under-
» stand what it means . I hope you don't
» think your daughter's late excursion with
» me had any thing criminal in it ».

» Go » , cried I , « thou art a wretch , a
» poor pitiful wretch , and every way a li-
» ar ; but your meanness secures you from
» my anger ! Yet , Sir , I am descended from
» a family that would not have borne this !
» And so , thou vile thing , to gratify a mo-
» mentary passion , thou hast made one poor
» creature wretched for life , and polluted
» a family that had nothing but honour for
» their portion ».

« If she or you » , returned he , « are re-
» solved to be miserable , I cannot help it .
» But you may still be happy ; and what-
» ever opinion you may have formed of me ,
» you shall ever find me ready to contri-
» bute to it . We can readily marry her
» to another , and what is more , she may
» keep her lover beside ; for I protest I
» shall ever continue to have a true regard
» for her ».

I found all my passions awakened at this

new degrading proposal; for though the mind may often be calm under great injuries, little villainy can at any time get within the soul, and sting it into rage.—

“ Avoid my sight, thou reptile”, cried I,
“ nor continue to insult me with thy presence. Were my brave son at home, he
“ would not suffer this; but I am old, and
“ disabled, and every way undone”.

“ I find”, cried he, “ you are bent upon
“ obliging me to talk in an harsher manner
“ than I intended. But as I have shewn
“ you what may be hoped from my friend-
“ ship, it may not be improper to represent
“ what may be the consequences of my re-
“ sentment. My attorney, to whom your
“ late bond has been transferred, threatens
“ hard, nor do I know how to prevent the
“ course of justice, except by paying the
“ money myself, which, as I have been at
“ some expences lately, previous to my in-
“ tended marriage, it is not so easy to be
“ done. And then my steward talks of
“ driving for the rent: it is certain he
“ knows his duty; for I never trouble my-
“ self with affairs of that nature. Yet still
“ I could wish to serve you, and even to
“ have you and your daughter present at
“ my marriage, which is shortly to be so-
“ lemnized with Miss Wilmot; it is even
“ the request of my charming Arabella her-
“ self, whom I hope you will not refuse”.

“ Mr Thornhill ”, replied I, “ heat me once for all : As to your marriage with any but my daughter, that I never will consent to ; and though your friendship could raise me to a throne , or your resentment sink me to the grave , yet would I despise both. Thou hast once wofully , irreparably , deceived me. I reposed my heart upon thine honour , and have found its baseness. Never more , therefore , expect friendship from me. Go , and possess what fortune has given thee , beauty , riches , health , and pleasure. Go , and leave me to want , infamy , disease , and sorrow. Yet humbled as I am , shall my heart still vindicate its dignity , and though thou hast my forgiveness , thou shalt ever have my contempt ”.

If so , “ returned he , “ depend upon it you shall feel the effects of this insolence , and we shall shortly see which is the fittest object of scorn , you or I ”.—Upon which he departed abruptly.

My wife and son , who were present at this interview , seemed terrified with the apprehension. My daughters also , finding that he was gone , came out to be informed of the result of our conference , which , when known , alarmed them not less than the rest. But as to myself , I disregarded the utmost stretch of his malevolence : he had already struck the blow , and now I

stood prepared to repel every new effort. Like one of those instruments used in the art of war, which, however thrown, still presents a point to receive the enemy.

We soon, however, found that he had not threatened in vain; for the very next day his steward came to demand my annual rent, which, by the train of accidents already related, I was unable to pay. The consequence of my incapacity was his driving my cattle that evening, and their being appraised and sold the next day for less than half their value. My wife and children now therefore intreated me to comply upon any terms, rather than incur certain destruction. They even begged of me to admit his visits once more, and used all their little eloquence to paint the calamities I was going to endure: the terrors of a prison, in so rigorous a season as the present, with the danger that threatened my health from the late accident that happened by the fire. But I continued inflexible.

“ Why, my treasures”, cried I, “ why will you thus attempt to persuade me to the thing that is not right? My duty has taught me to forgive him; but my conscience will not permit me to approve. Would you have me applaud to the world what my heart must internally condemn? Would you have me tamely sit down and flatter our infamous betrayer; and, to

» avoid a prison, continually suffer the more
» galling bonds of mental confinement ?
» No , never. If we are to be taken from
» this abode , only let us hold to the right ,
» and wherever we are thrown , we can
» still retire to a charming apartment , and
» look round our own hearts with intrep-
» dity and with pleasure ».

In this manner we spent that evening. Early the next morning , as the snow had fallen in great abundance in the night , my son was employed in clearing it away , and opening a passage before the door. He had not been thus engaged long , when he came running in , with looks all pale , to tell us that two strangers , whom he knew to be officers of justice , were making towards the house.

Just as he spoke they came in , and approaching the bed where I lay , after previously informing me of their employment and business , made me their prisoner , bidding me prepare to go with them to the county goal , which was eleven miles off.

« My friends » , said I , « this is severe
» weather on which you have come to take
» me to a prison ; and it is particularly un-
» fortunate at this time , as one of my arms
» has lately been burnt in a terrible man-
» ner , and it has thrown me into a slight
» fever , and I want clothes to cover me ,
» and I am now too weak and old to walk .

» far in such deep snow : but if it must be
» so , I'll try to obey you ».

I then turned to my wife and children ,
and directed them to get together what few
things were left us , and to prepare imme-
diately for leaving this place. I intreated
them to be expeditious , and desired my son
to assist his eldest sister , who , from a con-
sciousness that she was the cause of all our
calamities , was fallen , and had lost anguish
in insensibility. I encouraged my wife , who ,
pale and trembling , clasped our affrighted
little ones in her arms , that clung to her
bosom in silence , dreading to look round
at the strangers. In the mean time my
youngest daughter prepared for our depar-
ture , and as she received several hints to
use dispatch , in about an hour we were ready
to depart.

C H A P. X X V.

*No situation , however wretched it seems , but
has some sort of comfort attending it.*

WE set forward from this peaceful neigh-
bourhood , and walked on slowly. My eldest
daughter being enfeebled by a slow fever ;
which had begun for some days to under-
mine her constitution , one of the officers ,
who had an horse , kindly took her behind
him ; for even these men cannot entirely

divest themselves of humanity. My son led one of the little ones by the hand, and my wife the other, while I leaned upon my youngest girl, whose tears fell, not for her own but my distresses.

We were now got from my late dwelling about two miles, when we saw a crowd running and shouting behind us, consisting of about fifty of my poorest parishioners. These, with dreadful imprecations, soon seized upon the two officers of justice, and swearing they would never see their minister go to goal while they had a drop of blood to shed in his defence, were going to use them with great severity. The consequence might have been fatal, had I not immediately interposed, and with some difficulty rescued the officers from the hands of the enraged multitude. My children, who looked upon my delivery now as certain, appeared transported with joy, and were incapable of containing their raptures. But they were soon undeceived, upon hearing me address the poor deluded people who came, as they imagined, to do me service.

“ What ! my friends,” , cried I, “ and is this the way you love me ! Is this the manner you obey the instructions I have given you from the pulpit ! Thus to fly in the face of justice , and bring down ruin on yourselves and me ! Which is your

» ringleader? Shew me the man that has thus
» seduced you. As sure as he lives he shall
» feel my resentment. Alas! my dear de-
» luded flock, return back to the duty you
» owe to God, to your country, and to me.
» I shall yet perhaps one day see you in
» greater felicity here, and contribute to
» make your lives more happy. But let it
» at least be my comfort when I pen my
» fold for immortality, that not one here
» shall be wanting».

They now seemed all repentance, and melting into tears, came one after the other to bid me farewell. I shook each tenderly by the hand, and leaving them my blessing, proceeded forward without meeting any farther interruption. Some hours before night we reached the town, or rather village; for it consisted but of a few mean houses, having lost all its former opulence, and retaining no marks of its ancient superiority but the goal.

Upon entering, we put up at an inn, where we had such refreshments as could most readily be procured, and I supped with my family with my usual chearfulness. After seeing them properly accommodated for that night, I next attended the Sheriff's officers to the prison, which had formerly been built for the purposes of war, and consisted of one large apartment, strongly grated, and paved with stone, common to

both felons and debtors at certain hours in the four and twenty. Besides this, every prisoner had a separate cell, where he was locked in for the night.

I expected upon my entrance to find nothing but lamentations, and various sounds of misery; but it was very different. The prisoners seemed all employed in one common design, that of forgetting thought in merriment or clamour. I was apprized of the usual perquisite required upon these occasions, and immediately complied with the demand, though the little money I had was very near being all exhausted. This was immediately sent away for liquor, and the whole prison soon was filled with riot, laughter, and prophaneness.

“ How ”, cried I to myself, “ shall men so very wicked be cheerful, and shall I be melancholy! I feel only the same confinement with them, and I think I have more reason to be happy ”.

With such reflections I laboured to become cheerful; but cheerfulness was never yet produced by effort, which is itself painful. As I was sitting therefore in a corner of the goal, in a pensive posture, one of my fellow-prisoners came up, and sitting by me, entered into conversation. It was my constant rule in life never to avoid the conversation of any man who seemed to desire it; for if good, I might profit by his in-

struction; if bad, he might be assisted by mine. I found this to be a knowing man, of strong unlettered sense; but a thorough knowledge of the world, at it is called, or more properly speaking, of human nature on the wrong side. He asked me if I had taken care to provide myself with a bed, which was a circumstance I had never once attended to.

“That’s unfortunate”, cried he, “as you are allowed here nothing but straw, and your apartment is very large and cold. However, you seem to be something of a gentleman, and as I have been one myself in my time, part of my bed-clothes are heartily at your service”.

I thanked him, professing my surprize at finding such humanity in a goal in misfortunes; adding, to let him see that I was a scholar, “That the sage ancient seemed to understand the value of company in affliction, when he said, *Ton kosmon aire, ei dos ton etairon*; and in fact”, continued I, “what is the world if it affords only solitude”?

“You talk of the world, Sir”, returned my fellow-prisoner; “*the world, is in its dotage, and yet the cosmogony or creation of the world has puzzled the philosophers of every age. What a medley of opinions have they not broached upon the creation of the world. Sanconiathon, Manetho, Be-*

»rosus, and Ocellus Lucanus have all at-
»tempted it in vain. The latter has these
»words, *Anarchon ara kai atelutaion to*
»*pan*, which implies——“I ask pardon,
”Sir”, cried I, for interrupting so much
”learning; but I think I have heard all
”this before. Have I not had the pleasure
”of once seeing you at Welbridge fair,
”and is not your name Ephraim Jenkin-
”son”? At this demand he only sighed.
”I suppose you must recollect”, resumed
I, “one Doctor Primrose, from whom you
”bought a horse”.

He now at once recollected me; for the gloominess of the place and the approaching night had prevented his distinguishing my features before.—“Yes, Sir”, returned Mr Jenkinson, “I remember you perfectly well, I bought an horse, but forgot to pay for him. Your Neighbour Flamborough is the only prosecutor I am any way afraid of at the next assizes: for he intends to swear positively against me as a coiner. I am heartily sorry, Sir, I ever deceived you, or indeed any man; for you see”, continued he, shewing his shackles, “what my tricks have brought me to”.

“Well, Sir”, replied I, “your kindness in offering me assistance, when you could expect no return, shall be repaid with my endeavours to soften or totally sup-

» press Mr. Flamborough's evidence, and
» I will send my son to him for that pur-
» pose the first opportunity; nor do I in
» the least doubt but he will comply with
» my request, and as to my own evidence,
» you need be under no uneasiness about
» that».

“ Well, Sir ”, cried he, “ all the return
» I can make shall be yours. You shall
» have more than half my bed-clothes to-
» night, and I'll take care to stand your
» friend in the prison, where I think I have
» some influence”.

I thanked him, and could not avoid be-
ing surprised at the present youthful change
in his aspect; for at the time I had seen him
before, he appeared at least sixty.—“ Sir ”,
answered he, “ you are little acquainted
“ with the world; I had at that time false
» hair, and have learnt the art of counter-
» feiting every age from seventeen to seven-
» ty. Ah, Sir, had I but bestowed half the
» pains in learning a trade that I have in
» learning to be a scoundrel, I might have
» been a rich man at this day. But rogue
» as I am, still I may be your friend, and
» that perhaps when you least expect it”.

We were now prevented from further
conversation, by the arrival of the goaler's
servants, who came to call over the pris-
oners names, and lock up for the night. A
fellow also, with a bundle of straw for my

bed attended, who led me along a dark narrow passage into a room paved like the common prison, and in one corner of this I spread my bed, and the clothes given me by my fellow-prisoner; which done, my conductor, who was civil enough, bade me a good night. After my usual meditations, and having praised my Heavenly corrector, I laid myself down and slept with the utmost tranquillity till morning.

C H A P. X X V I.

A reformation in the goal. To make laws complete, they should reward as well as punish.

THE next morning early I was awakened by my family, whom I found in tears at my bed-side. The gloomy strength of every thing about us, it seems, had daunted them. I gently rebuked their sorrow, assuring them I had never slept with greater tranquillity, and next inquired after my eldest daughter, who was not among them. They informed me that yesterday's uneasiness and fatigue had increased her fever, and it was judged proper to leave her behind. My next care was to send my son to procure a room or two to lodge the family in, as near the prison as convenient.

ly could be found. He obeyed ; but could only find one apartment, which was hired at a small expence , for his mother and sisters , the gaoler with humanity consenting to let him and his two little brothers lye in the prison with me. A bed was therefore prepared for them in a corner of the room , which I thought answered very conveniently. I was willing however previously to know whether my little children chose to lye in a place which seemed to fright them upon entrance.

“ Well ” , cried I , “ my good boys , how do you like your bed ? I hope you are not afraid to lye in this room , dark as it appears ” .

“ No , Papa ” , says Dick , “ I am not afraid to lye any where , where you are ” .

“ And I ” , says Bill , who was yet but four years old , “ love every place best that my Papa is in ” .

After this , I allotted to each of the family what they were to do. My daughter was particularly directed to watch her declining sister’s health ; my wife was to attend me ; my little boys were to read to me : “ And as for you , my son ” , continued I , “ it is by the labour of your hands we must all hope to be supported. Your wages , as a day-labourer , will be full sufficient , with proper frugality , to maintain us all , and comfortably too. Thou

"art now sixteen years old, and hast
strength, and it was given thee, my son,
for very useful purposes; for it must save
from famine your helpless parents and
family. Prepare then this evening to look
out for work against to-morrow, and bring
home every night what money you earn,
for our support".

Having thus instructed him, and settled
the rest, I walked down to the common
prison, where I could enjoy more air and
room. But I was not long there when the
execrations, lewdness, and brutality that in-
vaded me on every side, drove me back
to my apartment again. Here I sat for some
time, pondering upon the strange infatua-
tion of wretches, who finding all mankind
in open arms against them, were however,
labouring to make themselves a future and a
tremendous enemy.

Their insensibility excited my highest
compassion, and blotted my own uneasiness
a while from my mind. It even appeared
as a duty incumbent upon me to attempt
to reclaim them. I resolved therefore once
more to return, and, in spite of their con-
tempt, to give them my advice, and conquer
them by perseverance. Going therefore
among them again, I informed Mr Jenkin-
son of my design, at which he laughed, but
communicated it to the rest. The propo-
sal was received with the greatest good-hu-

mour, as it promised to afford a new fund of entertainment to persons who had now no other resource for mirth, but what could be derived from ridicule or debauchery.

I therefore read them a portion of the service with a loud unaffected voice, and found my audience perfectly merry upon the occasion. Lewd whispers, groans of contrition burlesqued, winking and coughing, alternately excited laughter. However, I continued with my natural solemnity to read on, sensible that what I did might amend some, but could itself receive no contamination from any.

After reading, I entered upon my exhortation, which was rather calculated at first to amuse them than to reprove. I previously observed, that no other motive but their welfare could induce me to this; that I was their fellow-prisoner, and now gained nothing by preaching. I was sorry, I said, to hear them so very profane; because they got nothing by it, but might lose a great deal: « For be assured, my friends », cried I, « for you are my friends, however » the world may disclaim your friendship, » though you swore twelve thousand oaths » in a day, it would not put one penny in » your purse. Then what signifies calling » every moment upon the devil, and court- » ing his friendship, since you find how » scurvily

» scurvily he uses you. He has given you
» nothing here , you find , but a mouthful
» of oaths and an empty belly ; and by the
» best accounts I have of him , he will give
» you nothing that's good hereafter ».

« If used ill in our dealings with one
» man , we naturally go elsewhere. Were
» it not worth your while then , just to try
» how you may like the usage of another
» master , who gives you fair promises at
» least to come to him. Surely , my friends ,
» of all stupidity in the world , his must be
» greatest , who , after robbing an house ,
» runs to the thief-takers for protection. And
» yet how are you more wise ? You are
» all seeking comfort from him that has
» already betrayed you , applying to a more
» malicious being than any thief-taker of
» them all ; for they only decoy , and then
» hang you ; but he decoys and hangs , and
» what is worst of all , will not let you
» loose after the hangman has done ».

When I had concluded , I received the compliments of my audience , some of whom came and shook me by the hand , swearing that I was a very honest fellow , and that they desired my further acquaintance. I therefore promised to repeat my lecture next day , and actually conceived some hopes of making a reformation here ; for it had ever been my opinion , that no man was past the hour of amendment ,

every heart lying open to the shafts of reproof, if the archer could but take a proper aim. When I had thus satisfied my mind I went back to my apartment, where my wife had prepared a frugal meal, while Mr Jenkinson begged leave to add his dinner to ours, and partake of the pleasure, as he was kind enough to express it, of my conversation. He had not yet seen my family, for as they came to my apartment by a door in the narrow passage, already described, by this means they avoided the common prison. Jenkinson at the first interview therefore seemed not a little struck with the beauty of my youngest daughter, which her pensive air contributed to heighten, and my little ones did not pass unnoticed.

“ Alas, Doctor ”, cried he, “ these children are too handsome and too good for such a place as this ”!

“ Why, Mr Jenkinson ”, replied I, “ thank Heaven, my children are pretty tolerable in morals, and if they be good, it matters little for the rest ”.

“ I fancy, Sir ”, returned my fellow-prisoner, “ that it must give you great comfort to have this little family about you ”.

“ A comfort, Mr Jenkinson ”, replied I; “ yes, it is indeed a comfort, and I would not be without them for all the world ”.

» for they can make a dungeon seem a paradise. There is but one way in this life » of wounding my happiness, and that is » by injuring them ».

“ I am afraid then, Sir ”, cried he, “ that » I am in some measure culpable; for I » think I see here (looking at my son Moses) “ one that I have injured, and by whom » I wish to be forgiven ”.

My son immediately recollect^{ed} his voice and features, though he had before seen him in disguise, and taking him by the hand, with a smile forgave him. “ Yet ”, continued he, “ I can’t help wondering at what » you could see in my face, to think me » a proper mark for deception ”.

“ My dear Sir ”, returned the other, “ it » was not your face, but your white stockings, and the black ribband in your hair, » that allured me. But no disparagement » to your parts, I have deceived wiser men » than you in my time; and yet, with all » my tricks, the blockheads have been too » many for me at last ”.

I suppose ”, cried my son, “ that the » narrative of such a life as yours must be » extremely instructive and amusing ”.

“ Not much of either ”, returned Mr Jenkinson. “ Those relations which describe » the tricks and vices only of mankind, » by increasing our suspicion in life, retard » our success. The traveller that distrusts

» every person he meets, and turns back
» upon the appearance of every man that
» looks like a robber; seldom arrives in
» time to his journey's end.

« Indeed I think from my own experi-
» ence I may say, that the knowing one is
» the silliest fellow under the sun. I was
» thought cunning from my very child-
» hood: when but seven years old the la-
» dies would say that I was a perfect little
» man; at fourteen I knew the world,
» cocked my hat, and loved the ladies; at
» twenty, though I was perfectly honest,
» yet every one thought me so cunning,
» that not one would trust me. Thus I
» was at last obliged to turn sharper in my
» own defence, and have lived ever since,
» my head throbbing with schemes to de-
» ceive, and my heart palpitating with fears
» of detection.

» I used often to laugh at your honest
» simple neighbour Flamborough, and one
» way or another generally cheated him
» once a - year. Yet still the honest man
» went forward without suspicion, and grew
» rich, while I still continued tricksy and
» cunning, and was poor, without the con-
» solation of being honest.

« However », continued he, « let me
» know your case, and what has brought
» you here; perhaps, though I have not
» skill to avoid a goal myself, I may extri-
» cate my friends ».

In compliance with his curiosity, I informed him of the whole train of accidents and follies that had plunged me into my present troubles, and my utter inability to get free.

After hearing my story, and pausing some minutes, he slapt his forehead, as if he had hit upon something material, and took his leave, saying he would try what could be done.

CHAP. XXVII.

The same subject continued.

THE next morning I communicated to my wife and children the scheme I had planned of reforming the prisoners, which they received with universal disapprobation, alledging the impossibility and impropriety of it; adding, that my endeavours would no way contribute to their amendment, but might probably disgrace my calling.

"Excuse me", returned I, "these people, however fallen, are still men, and that is a very good title to my affections. Good council rejected returns to enrich the giver's bosom; and though the instruction I communicate may not mend them, yet it will assuredly mend myself. If these wretches, my children, were

” princes, there would be thousands ready
” to offer their ministry; but, in my opi-
” nion, the heart that is buried in a dun-
” geon is as precious as that seated upon a
” throne. Yes, my treasures, if I can mend
” them I will; perhaps they will not all
” despise me. Perhaps I may catch up even
” one from the gulph, and that will be
” great gain; for is there upon earth a gem
” so precious as the human soul”?

Thus saying, I left them, and descended to the common prison, where I found the prisoners very merry, expecting my arrival; and each prepared with some goal-trick to play upon the doctor. Thus, as I was going to begin, one turned my wig awry, as if by accident, and then asked my pardon. A second, who stood at some distance, had a knack of spitting through his teeth, which fell in showers upon my book. A third would cry Amen in such an affected tone as gave the rest great delight. A fourth hath slyly picked my pocket of my spectacles. But there was one whose trick gave more universal pleasure than all the rest; for observing the manner in which I had disposed my books on the table before me, he very dextrously displaced one of them, and put an obscene jest-book of his own in the place. However, I took no notice of all that this mischievous groupe of little beings could do; but went on, per-

fetly sensible that what was ridiculous in my attempt, would excite mirth only the first or second time, while what was serious would be permanent. My design succeeded, and in less than six days some were penitent, and all attentive.

It was now that I applauded my perseverance and address, at thus giving sensibility to wretches divested of every moral feeling, and now began to think of doing them temporal services also, by rendering their situation somewhat more comfortable. Their time had hitherto been divided between famine and excess, tumultuous riot and bitter repining. Their only employment was quarrelling among each other, playing cribbage, and cutting tobacco stoppers. From this last mode of idle industry I took the hint of setting such as chose to work at cutting pegs for tobacconists and shoemakers, the proper wood being bought by a general subscription, and when manufactured, sold by my appointment; so that each earned something every day: a trifle indeed, but sufficient to maintain him.

I did not stop here, but instituted fines for the punishment of immorality, and rewards for peculiar industry. Thus in less than a fortnight I had formed them into something social and humane, and had the pleasure of regarding myself as a legislator, who had brought men from their native ferocity into friendship and obedience.

And it were highly to be wished, that legislative power would thus direct the law rather to reformation than severity. That it would appear convinced that the work of eradicating crimes is not by making punishments familiar, but formidable. Instead of our present prissons, which find or make men guilty, which inclose wretches for the commission of one crime, and return them, if returned alive, fitted for the perpetration of thousands; it were to be wished we had, as in other parts of Europe, places of penitence and solitude, where the accused might be attended by such as could give them repentance if guilty, or new motives to virtue if innocent. And this, but not the increasing punishments, is the way to mend a state: nor can I avoid even questioning the validity of that right which social combinations have assumed, of capitally punishing offences of a slight nature. In cases of murder their right is obvious, as it is the duty of us all, from the law of self-defence, to cut off that man who has shewn a disregard for the life of another. Against such, all nature rises in arms; but it is not so against him who steals my property. Natural law gives me no right to take away his life, as by that the horse he steals is as much his property as mine. If then I have any right, it must be from a compact made between us, that he who de-

privēs the other of his horse shall die. But this is a false compact; because no man has a right to barter his life, no more than to take it away, as it is not his own. And next the compact is inadequate, and would be set aside even in a court of modern equity, as there is a great penalty for a very trifling convenience, since it is far better that two men should live, than that one man should ride. But a compact that is false between two men, is equally so between an hundred, or an hundred thousand; for as ten millions of circles can never make a square, so the united voice of myriads cannot lend the smallest foundation to falsehood. It is thus that Reason speaks, and untutored Nature says the same thing. Savages that are directed nearly by natural law alone are very tender of the lives of each other; they seldom shed blood but to retaliate former cruelty.

Our Saxon ancestors, fierce as they were in war, had but few executions in times of peace; and in all commencing governments that have the print of nature still strong upon them, scarce any crime is held capital.

It is among the citizens of a refined community that penal laws, which are in the hands of the rich, are laid upon the poor. Government, while it grows older, seems to acquire the moroseness of age; and as if our possessions were become dearer in

proportion as they increased, as if the more enormous our wealth, the more extensive our fears, our possessions are paled up with new edicts every day, and hung round with gibbets to scare every invader.

Whether is it from the number of our penal laws, or the licentiousness of our people, that this country should shew more convicts in a year, than half the dominions of Europe united? Perhaps it is owing to both; for they mutually produce each other. When by indiscriminate penal laws a nation beholds the same punishment affixed to dissimilar degrees of guilt, from perceiving no distinction in the penalty, the people are led to lose all sense of distinction in the crime, and this distinction is the bulwark of all morality: thus the multitude of laws produce new vices, and new vices call for fresh restraints.

It were to be wished then that power, instead of contriving new laws to punish vice, instead of drawing hard the cords of society till a convulsion come to burst them, instead of cutting away wretches as useless, before we have tried their utility, instead of converting correction into vengeance, it were to be wished that we tried the restrictive arts of government, and made law the protector, but not the tyrant of the people. We should then find that creatures whose souls are held as dross, only wanted the

hand of a refiner; we should then find that wretches, now stuck up for long tortures, lest luxury should feel a momentary pang, might, if properly treated, serve to finew the state in times of danger; that, as their faces are like ours, their hearts are so too; that few minds are so base as that perseverance cannot amend; that a man may see his last crime without dying for it; and that very little blood will serve to cement our security.

C H A P. X X V I I I.

Happiness and misery rather the result of prudence than of virtue in this life. Temporal evils or felicities are regarded by Heaven as things merely in themselves trifling and unworthy its care in the distribution.

I HAD now been confined more than a fortnight, but had not since my arrival been visited by my dear Olivia, and I greatly longed to see her. Having communicated my wishes to my wife, the next morning the poor girl entered my apartment, leaning on her sister's arm. The change which I saw in her countenance struck me. The numberless graces that once resided there were now fled, and the hand of death seem-

ed to have moulded every feature to alarm me. Her temples were sunk, her forehead was tense, and a fatal paleness sat upon her cheek.

“ I am glad to see thee, my dear ”, cried I ; “ but why this dejection, Livy ? I hope, ” my love, you have too great a regard for ” me, to permit disappointment thus to ” undermine a life which I prize as my ” own. Be cheerful, child, and we may yet ” see happier days ”.

“ You have ever, Sir ”, replied she, ” been kind to me, and it adds to my pain ” that I shall never have an opportunity of ” sharing that happiness you promise. Happ- ” piness, I fear, is no longer reserved for ” me here; and I long to be rid of a place ” where I have only found distress. Indeed, ” Sir, I wish you would make a proper sub- ” mission to Mr Thornhill; it may, in some ” measure, induce him to pity you, and it ” will give me relief in dying ”.

“ Never, child ”, replied I, “ I never ” shall be brought to acknowledge my daugh- ” ter a prostitute; for tho’ the world may ” look upon your offence with scorn, let ” it be mine to regard it as a mark of ” credulity, not of guilt. My dear, I am ” no way miserable in this place, however ” dismal it may seem, and be assured, that ” while you continue to bless me by living, ” he shall never have my consent to make

» you more wretched by marrying another ».

After the departure of my daughter, my fellow-prisoner, who was by at this interview, sensibly enough expostulated upon my obstinacy, in refusing a submission which promised to give me freedom. He observed that the rest of my family was not to be sacrificed to the peace of one child alone, and she the only one who had offended me. « Besides », added he, « I don't know if it be just thus to obstruct the union of man and wife, which you do at present, by refusing to consent to a match which you cannot hinder, but may render unhappy ».

« Sir », replied I, « you are unacquainted with the man that oppresses us. I am very sensible that no submission I can make could procure me liberty even for an hour. I am told, that even in this very room a debtor of his, no later than last year, died for want. But though my submission and approbation could transfer me from hence, to the most beautiful apartment he his possessed of; yet I would grant neither, as something whispers me that it would be giving a sanction to adultery. While my daughter lives, no other marriage of his shall ever be legal in my eye. Were she removed, indeed, I should be the basest of men, from any resentment of my own, to attempt putting

» asunder those who wish for an union.
» No, villain as he is, I could then wish
» him married, to prevent the consequences
» of his future debaucheries. But should I
» not now be the most cruel of all fathers,
» to sign an instrument which must send
» my child to the grave, merely to avoid
» a prison myself; and thus to escape one
» pang, break my child's heart with a
» thousand? "

He acquiesced in the justice of this answer, but could not avoid observing, that he feared my daughter's life was already too much wasted to keep me long a prisoner. "However", continued he, "tho' you refuse to submit to the nephew, I hope you have no objections to laying your case before the uncle, who has the first character in the kingdom for every thing that is just and good. I would advise you to send him a letter by the post, intimating all his nephew's ill usage, and my life for it, that in three days you shall have an answer". I thanked him for the hint, and instantly set about complying; but I wanted paper, and unluckily all our money had been laid out that morning in provisions: however he supplied me.

For the three ensuing days I was in a state of anxiety, to know what reception my letter might meet with; but in the mean time was frequently solicited by my wife

to submit to any conditions rather than remain here, and every hour received repeated accounts of the decline of my daughter's health. The third day and the fourth arrived, but I received no answer to my letter: the complaints of a stranger against a favourite nephew, were no way likely to succeed; so that these hopes soon vanished like all my former. My mind, however, still supported itself, though confinement and bad air began to make a visible alteration in my health, and my arm that had suffered in the fire, grew worse. But my children still sat by me, and while I was stretched on my straw, read to me by turns, or listened and wept at my instructions. But my daughter's health declined faster than mine; every message from her contributed to increase my apprehensions and pain. The fifth morning after I had written the letter which was sent to Sir William Thornhill, I was alarmed with an account that she was speechless. Now it was, -that confinement was truly painful to me; my soul was bursting from its prison to be near the pillow of my child, to comfort, to strengthen her, to receive her last wishes, and teach her soul the way to heaven. Another account came: She was expiring, and yet I was debarred the small comfort of weeping by her. My fellow prisoner, some time after, came with the last account. He bade

me be patient. She was dead! dead!—
The next morning he returned, and found
me with my two little ones, now my only
companions, who were using all their in-
nocent efforts to comfort me. They in-
treated to read to me, and bid me not to
cry, for I was now too old to weep. “And
is not my sister an angel, now, Papa”,
cried the eldest, “and why then are you
sorry for her? I wish I were an angel
out of this frightful place, if my Papa
were with me”. “Yes”, added my young-
est darling, “Heaven, where my sister is,
is a finer place than this, and there are
none but good people there, and the peo-
ple here are very bad.

Mr Jenkinson interrupted their harmless
prattle, by observing that now my daughter
was no more, I should seriously think of the
rest of my family, and attempt to save my
own life, which was every day declining, for
want of necessaries and wholesome air. He
added, that it was now incumbent on me to
sacrifice any pride or resentment of my own,
to the welfare of those who depended on me
for support; and that I was now, both by
reason and justice, obliged to try to recon-
cile my landlord.

“Heaven be praised”, replied I, “there
is no pride left me now, I should detest
my own heart if I saw either pride or re-
sentment lurking there. On the contra-

» ry , as my oppressor has been once my pa-
» rishioner , I hope one day to present him
» an unpolluted soul at the eternal tribunal.
» No , Sir , I have no resentment now , and
» though he has taken from me what I held
» dearer than all his treasures , though he
» has wrung my heart , for I am sick almost
» to fainting , very sick , my fellow-prisoner ,
» yet that shall never inspire me with ven-
» geance. I am now willing to approve
» his marriage , and if this submission can
» do him any pleasure , let him know , that
» if I have done him any injury , I am sorry
» for it ». Mr Jenkinson took pen and ink ,
and wrote down my submission nearly as I
have expressed it , to which I signed my
name. My son was employed to carry the
letter to Mr Thornhill , who was then at
his seat in the country. He went , and in
about six hours returned with a verbal answer.
He had some difficulty , he said , to get a
sight of his landlord , as the servants were
insolent and suspicious ; but he accidentally
saw him as he was going out upon business ,
preparing for his marriage , which was to be
in three days. He continued to inform us ,
that he stopt up in the humblest manner ,
and delivered the letter , which , when Mr
Thornhill had read , he said that all submission
was now too late and unnecessary ; that he
had heard of our application to his uncle ,
which met with the contempt it deserved ;

and as for the rest, that all future applications should be directed to his attorney, not to him. He observed, however, that as he had a very good opinion of the discretion of the two young ladies, they might have been the most agreeable intercessors.

“ Well, Sir ”, said I to my fellow-prisoner, “ you now discover the temper of the man that oppresses me. He can at once be facetious and cruel; but let him use me as he will, I shall soon be free, in spite of all his bolts to restrain me. I am now drawing towards an abode that looks brighter as I approach it : this expectation cheers my afflictions; and though I shall leave an helpless family of orphans behind me, yet they will not be utterly forsaken; some friend, perhaps, will be found to assist them for the sake of their poor father, and some may charitably relieve them for the sake of their heavenly Father ”.

Just as I spoke, my wife, whom I had not seen that day before, appeared with looks of terror, and making efforts, but unable to speak. “ Why, my love ”, cried I, “ why will you thus increase my affliction by your own, what though no submissions can turn our severe master, tho' he has doomed me to die in this place of wretchedness, and though we have lost a darling child, yet still you will find com-

» fort in your other children when I shall
» be no more. « We have indeed lost »,
returned she, « a darling child. My Sophia,
» my dearest, is gone, snatched from us,
» carried off by ruffians » !

« How, Madam », cried my fellow-prisoner, « miss Sophia carried off by villains !
» sure it cannot be » ?

She could only answer with a fixed look
and a flood of tears. But one of the pri-
soners wives, who was present, and came
in with her, gave us a more distinct account :
she informed us, that as my wife, my daugh-
ter, and herself, were taking a walk toge-
ther on the great road a little way out of
the village, a post-chaise and four drove up
to them and instantly stopt. Upon which,
a well drest man, but not Mr Thornhill,
stepping out, clasped my daughter round
the waist, and forcing her in, bid the po-
stillion drive on, so that they were out of
sight in a moment.

« Now », cried I, « the sum of my mi-
» series is made up, nor is it in the power
» of any thing on earth to give me another
» pang. What ! not one left ! not to leave
» me one ! the monster ! the child that was
» next my heart ! she had the beauty of an
» angel, and almost the wisdom of an angel.
» But support that woman, nor let her fall.
» Not to leave me one » !——Alas ! my
» husband », said my wife, « you seem to want

» comfort even more than I , Our distres-
» ses are great; but I could bear this and
» more , if I saw you but easy. They may
» take away my children and all the world,
» if they leave me but you ».

My son , who was present , endeavoured to moderate our grief ; he bade us take comfort , for he hoped that we might still have reason to be thankful.—“ My child ”, cried I , “ look round the world , and see if there be any happiness left me now . Is not every ray of comfort shut out ; while all our bright prospects only lye beyond the grave ”!—“ My dear father ”, returned he , “ I hope there is still something that will give you an interval of satisfaction ; for I have a letter from my brother George ”.—“ What of him child ”, interrupted I , “ does he know of our misery ? I hope my boy is exempt from any part of what his wretched family suffers ”?—“ Yes , Sir ”, returned he , “ he is perfectly gay , cheerful , and happy . His letter brings nothing but good news ; he is the favourite of his colonel , who promises to procure him the very next lieutenancy that becomes vacant ”!

“ And are you sure of all this ”, cried my wife , “ are you sure that nothing ill has befallen my boy ”?—“ Nothing indeed , Madam ”, returned my son , “ you shall see the letter , which will give you

„the highest pleasure ; and if any thing can „procure you comfort , I am sure that will . „But are you sure „, still repeated she , „that the letter is from himself , and that „he is really so happy ?—Yes , Madam „, replied he , „it is certainly his , and that „will one day be the credit and support of „our family „ !—“Then I thank Providence „, cried she , „that my last letter to „him has miscarried „. “Yes , my dear „, continued she „, turning to me , „I will „now confess , that tho' the hand of Heaven „is sore upon us in other instances , it has „been favourable here . By the last letter „I wrote my son , which was in the bitterness „of anger , I desired him upon his mother's blessing , and if he had the heart of „a man , to see justice done his father and sister , and avenge our cause . But thanks be to him that directs all things , it has miscarried , and I am at rest „. Woman „, cried I , „thou hast done very ill , and at another time my reproaches might have been more severe . Oh ! what a tremendous gulph hast thou escaped , that would have buried both thee and him in endless ruin . Providence , indeed , has here been kinder to us than we to ourselves . It has reserved that son to be the father and protector of my children when I shall be away . How unjustly did I complain of being stript of every com-

» fort, when still I hear that he is happy
» and insensible of our afflictions; still kept
» in reserve to support his widowed mo-
» ther, to protect his brothers and sisters.
» But what sisters has he left, he has no
» sisters now, they are all gone, robbed
» from me, and I am undone».——Fa-
» ther», interrupted my son, «I beg you
» will give me leave to read his letter, I
» know it will please you». Upon which,
with my permission, he read as follows:

Honoured Sir,

I HAVE called off my imagination a few moments from the pleasures that surround me, to fix it upon objects that are still more pleasing, the dear little fire-side at home. My fancy draws that harmless groupe as listening to every line of this with great composure. I view those faces with delight which never felt the deforming hand of ambition or distress! But whatever your happiness may be at home, I am sure it will be some addition to it, to hear that I am perfectly pleased with my situation, and every way happy here.

Our regiment is countermanded, and not to leave the kingdom; the colonel, who professes himself my friend, takes me with him to all companies where he is acquainted, and after my first visit, I generally find

myself received with increased respect upon repeating it. I danced last night with Lady G——, and could I forget you know whom, I might be perhaps successful. But it is my fate still to remember others, while I am myself forgotten by most of my absent friends, and in this number, I fear, Sir, that I must consider you; for I have long expected the pleasure of a letter from home to no purpose. Olivia and Sophia too, promised to write, but seem to have forgotten me. Tell them they are two arrant little baggages, and that I am this moment in a most violent passion with them: yet still, I know not how, tho' I want to bluster a little, my heart is respondent only to softer emotions. Then tell them, Sir, that after all, I love them affectionately, and be assured of my ever remaining

Your dutiful son.

“ In all our miseries ”, cried I, “ what thanks have we not to return, that one at least of our family is exempted from what we suffer. Heaven be his guard, and keep my boy thus happy to be the supporter of his widowed mother, and the father of these two babes, which are all the patrimony I can now bequeath him. May he keep their innocence from

» the temptations of want , and be their
» conductor in the paths of honour ». I had
scarce said these words , when a noise
like that of a tumult , seemed to proceed
from the prison below ; it died away soon
after , and a clanking of fetters was heard
along the passage that led to my apartment.
The keeper of the prison entered , holding
a man all bloody , wounded and fettered
with the heaviest irons . I looked with com-
passion on the wretch as he approached me ,
but with horror when I found it was my
own son.—“ My George ! My George !
» and do I behold thee thus ! Wounded !
» Fettered ! Is this thy happiness ! Is this
» the manner you return to me ! O that
» this sight could break my heart at once ,
» and let me die » !

“ Where , Sir , is your fortitude ” , re-
turned my son with an intrepid voice . “ I
» must suffer , my life is forfeited , and let
them take it ; it is my last happiness that
» I have committed no murder , tho’ I have
» lost all hopes of pardon ” .

I tried to restrain my passions for a few
minutes in silence , but I thought I should
have died with the effort—“ O my boy
» my heart weeps to behold thee thus , and
» I cannot , cannot help it . In the moment
» that I thought thee blest , and prayed for
» thy safety , to behold thee thus again
» Chained , wounded ! And yet the dea-

» of the youthful is happy. But I am old,
» a very old man, and have lived to see
» this day. To see my children all un-
» timely falling about me, while I conti-
» nue a wretched survivor in the midst of
» ruin! May all the curses that ever sunk
» a soul fall heavy upon the murderer of
» my children. May he live, like me, to
» see"—

“ Hold, Sir”, replied my son, “ or I
shall blush for thee. How, Sir, forget-
ful of your age, your holy calling, thus
to arrogate the justice of Heaven, and
fling those curses upward that must soon
descend to crush thy own grey head with
destruction! No, Sir, let it be your care
now to fit me for that vile death I must
shortly suffer, to arm me with hope and
resolution, to give me courage to drink
of that bitterness which must shortly be
my portion”.

“ My child, you must not die: I am sure
no offence of thine can deserve so vile a
punishment. My George could never be
guilty of any crime to make his ancestors
ashamed of him”.

“ Mine, Sir”, returned my son, “ is, I
fear, an unpardonable one. I have sent
a challenge, and that is death by a late
act of parliament. When I received my
mother’s letter from home, I immediate-
ly came down, determined to punish the

» betrayer of our honour, and sent him an
» order to meet me, which he answered,
» not in person, but by his dispatching four
» of his domestics to seize me. I wounded
» one, but the rest made me their prisoner.
» The coward is determined to put the law
» in execution against me, the proofs are
» undeniable; and as I am the first trans-
» gressor upon the statute, I see no hopes
» of pardon. But you have often charmed
» me with the lessons of fortitude, let me
» now, Sir, find them in your example».

« And, my son, you shall find them. I
» am now raised above this world, and all
» the pleasures it can produce. From this
» moment I break from my heart all the
» ties that held it down to earth, and will
» prepare to fit us both for eternity. Yes,
» my son, I will point out the way, and my
» soul shall guide yours in the ascent, for
» we will take our flight together. I now
» see and am convinced you can expect no
» pardon here, and I can only exhort you
» to seek it at that greatest tribunal where
» we both shall shortly answer. But let
» us not to be niggardly in our exhortation,
» but let all our fellow-prisoners have a
» share: good goaler let them be permitted
» to stand here, while I attempt to improve
» them». Thus saying, I made an effort to
rise from my straw, but wanted strength,
and was able only to recline against the

wall. The prisoners assembled according to my directions, for they loved to hear my council, my son and his mother supported me on either side; I looked and saw that none were wanting, and then addressed them with the following exhortation.

C H A P. X X I X.

The equal dealings of Providence demonstrated with regard to the happy and the miserable here below. That from the nature of pleasure and pain, the wretched must be repaid the balance of their sufferings in the life hereafter.

My friends, my children, and fellow-sufferers, when I reflect on the distribution of good and evil here below, I find that much has been given man to enjoy, yet still more to suffer. Though we should examine the whole world, we shall not find one man so happy as to have nothing left to wish for; but we daily see thousands who by suicide shew us they have nothing left to hope. In this life then it appears that we cannot be entirely blest, but yet we may be completely miserable!

Why man should thus feel pain, why our wretchedness should be requisite in the formation of universal felicity, why, when

all other systems are made perfect only by the perfection of their subordinate parts, the great system should require for its perfection, parts that are not only subordinate to others, but imperfect in themselves! These are questions that never can be explained, and might be useless if known. On this subject Providence has thought fit to elude our curiosity, satisfied with granting us motives to consolation.

In this situation, man has called in the friendly assistance of philosophy, and heaven seeing the incapacity of that to console him, has given him the aid of religion. The consolations of philosophy are very amusing, but often fallacious. It tells us, that life is filled with comforts, if we will but enjoy them; and on the other hand, that though we unavoidably have miseries here, life is short, and they will soon be over. Thus do these consolations destroy each other; for if life is a place of comfort, its shortness must be misery, and if it be long, our griefs are protracted. Thus philosophy is weak; but religion comforts in an higher strain. Man is here, it tells us, fitting up his mind, and preparing it for another abode. When the good man leaves the body, and is all a glorious mind, he will find he has been making himself a heaven of happiness here, while the wretch that has been maimed and contaminated by his

vices, shrinks from his body with terror, and finds that he has anticipated the vengeance of heaven To religion then we must hold in every circumstance of life for our truest comfort; for if already we are happy, it is a pleasure to think that we can make that happiness unending, and if we are miserable, it is very consoling to think that there is a place of rest. Thus to the fortunate religion holds out a continuance of bliss, to the wretched a change from pain.

But though religion is very kind to all men, it has promised peculiar reward to the unhappy; the sick, the naked, the houseless, the heavy-laden, and the prisoner, have ever most frequent promises in our sacred law. The Author of our religion every where professes himself the wretch's friend, and unlike the false ones of this world, bestows all his careesses upon the forlorn. The unthinking have censured this as partiality, as a preference without merit to deserve it. But they never reflect, that it is not in the power even of heaven itself to make the offer of unceasing felicity as great a gift to the happy as to the miserable. To the first, eternity is but a single blessing, since at most it but increases what they already possess. To the latter it is a double advantage; for it diminishes their pain here, and rewards them with heavenly bliss hereafter.

But Providence is in another respect kinder to the poor than the rich; for as it thus makes the life after death more desirable, so it smoothes the passage there. The wretched have long familiarity with every face of terror. The man of sorrows lays himself quietly down, he has no possessions to regret and but few ties to stop his departure: he feels only nature's pang in the final separation, and this is no way greater than he has often fainted under before; for after a certain degree of pain, every new breach that death opens in the constitution, nature kindly covers with insensibility.

Thus providence has given the wretched two advantages over the happy in this life greater felicity in dying, and in heaven a that superiority of pleasure which arises from contrasted enjoyment. And this superiority, my friends, is no small advantage, and seems to be one of the pleasures of the poor man in the parable; for though he was already in heaven, and felt all the raptures it could give, yet it was mentioned as an addition to his happiness, that he had once been wretched, and now was comforted, that he had known what it was to be miserable, and now felt what it was to be happy.

Thus, my friends, you see religion do what philosophy could never do: it sheweth the equal dealings of heaven to the hap-

and the unhappy, and levels all human enjoyments to nearly the same standard. It gives to both rich and poor the same happiness hereafter, and equal hopes to aspire after it; but if the rich have the advantage of enjoying pleasure here, the poor have the endless satisfaction of knowing what it was once to be miserable, when crowned with endless felicity hereafter; and even though this should be called a small advantage, yet being an eternal one, it must make up by duration what the temporal happiness of the great may have exceeded by intenseness.

These are therefore the consolations which the wretched have peculiar to themselves, and in which they are above the rest of mankind; in other respects they are below them. They who would know the miseries of the poor must see life and endure it. To declaim on the temporal advantages they enjoy, is only repeating what none either believe or practise. The men who have the necessaries of living are not poor, and they who want them must be miserable. Yes, my friends, we must be miserable. No vain efforts of a refined imagination can sooth the wants of nature, can give elastic sweetnes to the dank vapour of a dungeon, or ease to the throbings of a woe-worn heart. Let the philosopher from his couch of softness tell us that we can resist all these.

Alas ! the effort by which we resist them is still the greatest pain. Death is flight, and any man may sustain it ; but torments are dreadful, and these no man can endure.

To us then, my friends, the promises of happiness in heaven should be peculiarly dear ; for if our reward be in this life alone, we are then indeed of all men the most miserable. When I look round these gloomy walls, made to terrify, as well as to confine us ; this light that only serves to shew the horrors of the place, those shackles that tyranny has imposed, or crime made necessary ; when I survey these emaciated looks, and hear those groans, O my friends, what a glorious exchange would heaven be for these ! To fly through regions unconfined as air, to bask in the sunshine of eternal bliss, to carol over endless hymns of praise, to have no master to threaten or insult us, but the form of Goodness himself for ever in our eyes ; when I think of these things, death becomes the messenger of very glad tidings ; when I think of these things, his sharpest arrow becomes the staff of my support ; when I think of these things, what is there in life worth having ? When I think of these things, what is there that should not be spurned away ? Kings in their palaces should groan for such advantages ; but we, humbled as we are, should yearn for them.

And shall these things be ours? Ours they will certainly be, if we but try for them; and, what is a comfort, we are shut out from many temptations that would retard our pursuit. Only let us try for them, and they will certainly be ours, and, what is still a comfort, shortly too; for if we look back on past life, it appears but a very short span, and whatever we may think of the rest of life, it will yet be found of less duration; as we grow older, the days seem to grow shorter, and our intimacy with time, ever lessens the perception of his stay. Then let us take comfort now, for we shall soon be at our journey's end; we shall soon lay down the heavy burthen laid by Heaven upon us, and though death, the only friend of the wretched, for a little while mocks the weary traveller with the view, and like his horizon, still flies before him; yet the time will certainly and shortly come, when we shall cease from our toil; when the luxurious great ones of the world shall no more tread us to the earth; when we shall think with pleasure on our sufferings below; when we shall be surrounded with all our friends, or such as deserved our friendship; when our bliss shall be unutterable, and still, to crown all, unending.

C H A P. X X X.

Happier prospects begin to appear. Let us be inflexible, and fortune will at last change in our favour.

WHEN I had thus finished and my audience was retired, the goaler, who was one of the most humane of his profession, hoped I would not be displeased, as what he did was but his duty, observing that he must be obliged to remove my son into a stronger cell, but that he should be permitted to revisit me every morning. I thanked him for his clemency, and grasping my boy's hand, bade him farewell, and be mindful of the great duty that was before him.

I again, therefore laid me down, and one of my little ones sat by my bed-side reading, when Mr Jenkinson entering, informed me that there was news of my daughter; for that she was seen by a person about two hours before in a strange gentleman's company, and that they had stopt at a neighbouring village for refreshment, and seemed as if returning to town. He had scarce delivered this news, when the goaler came with looks of haste and pleasure, to inform me, that my daughter was found. Moses came running in a moment after crying out

that his sister Sophy was below, and coming up with our old friend Mr Burchell.

Just as he delivered this news my dearest girl entered, and with looks almost wild with pleasure, ran to kiss me in a transport of affection. Her mother's tears and silence also shewed her pleasure—"Here, "Papa", cried the charming girl, "here is the brave man to whom I owe my deliverance; to this gentleman's intrepidity I am indebted for my happiness and safety—". A kiss from Mr Burchell, whose pleasure seemed even greater than her's, interrupted what she was going to add.

"Ah, Mr Burchell", cried I, "this is but a wretched habitation you now find us in; and we are now very different from what you last saw us. You were ever our friend: we have long discovered our errors with regard to you, and repented of our ingratitude. After the vile usage you then received at my hands, I am almost ashamed to behold your face; yet I hope you'll forgive me, as I was deceived by a base ungenerous wretch, who, under the mask of friendship, has undone me."

"It is impossible", replied Mr Burchell, "that I should forgive you, as you never deserved my resentment. I partly saw your delusion then, and as it was out of my power to restrain, I could only pity it!"

“ It was ever my conjecture ” , cried I ;
“ that your mind was noble ; but now I
“ find it so. But tell me , my dear child ,
“ how hast thou been relieved , or who the
“ ruffians were who carried thee away ” ?

“ Indeed , Sir ” , replied she , “ as to the
“ villain who brought me off , I am yet ig-
“ norant. For , as my Mamma and I were
“ walking out , he came behind us , and al-
“ most before I could call for help , forced
“ me into the post-chaise , and in an instant
“ the horses drove away. I met several on
“ the road , to whom I cried out for assist-
“ ance ; but they disregarded my intreaties.
“ In the mean time , the ruffian himself used
“ every art to hinder me from crying out :
“ he flattered and threatened by turns , and
“ swore , that if I continued but silent , he in-
“ tended no harm. In the mean time , I had
“ broken the canvas that he had drawn up ,
“ and whom should I perceive at some dis-
“ tance but your old friend Mr Burchell ,
“ walking along with his usual swiftness ,
“ with the great stick for which we used so
“ much to ridicule him. As soon as we
“ came within hearing , I called out to him
“ by name , and intreated his help. I repeat-
“ ed my exclamations several time , upon
“ which , with a very loud voice , he bid the
“ postilion stop ; but the boy took no notice ,
“ but drove on with still greater speed. I
“ now thought he could never overtake us

when in less than a minute I saw Mr Burchell come running up by the side of the horses, and with one blow knock the postillion to the ground. The horses when he was fallen, soon stopt of themselves, and the ruffian stepping out, with oaths and menaces drew his sword, and ordered him at his peril to retire; but Mr Burchell running up, shivered his sword to pieces, and then pursued him for near a quarter of a mile; but he made his escape. I was at this time come out myself, willing to assist my deliverer; but he soon returned to me in triumph. The postillion, who was recovered, was going to make his escape too; but Mr Burchell ordered him at his peril to mount again, and drive back to town. Finding it impossible to resist, he reluctantly complied, though the wound he had received seemed, to me at least, to be dangerous. He continued to complain of the pain as we drove along, so that he at last excited Mr Burchell's compassion, who, at my request, exchanged him for another at an inn where we called on our return.

"Welcome then", cried I, "my child, and thou her gallant deliverer, a thousand welcomes. Though our cheer is but wretched, yet our hearts are ready to receive you. And now, Mr Burchell, as

» you have delivered my girl, if you think
» her a recompence she is yours, if you can
» stoop to an alliance with a family so poor
» as mine, take her, obtain her consent, as
» I know you have her heart, and you have
» mine. And let me tell you, Sir, that I
» give you no small treasure, she has been
» celebrated for beauty, it is true, but that
» is not my meaning, I give you up a trea-
» sure in her mind ».

« But I suppose, Sir », cried Mr Burchell,
» that you are apprized of my circumstan-
» ces, and of my incapacity to support her
» as she deserves » ?

« If your present objection », replied I,
» be meant as an evasion of my offer, I de-
» sist : but I know no man so worthy to
» deserve her as you ; and if I could give
» her thousands, and thousands sought her
» from me, yet my honest brave Burchell
» should be my dearest choice ».

To all this his silence alone seemed to give a mortifying refusal, and without the least reply to my offer, he demanded if we could not be furnished with refreshment from the next inn ? To which being answered in the affirmative, he ordered them to send in the best dinner that could be provided upon such short notice. He bespoke also a dozen of their best wine ; and some cordials for me. Adding with a smile, that he would stretch a little for once, and tho'

in a prison, asserted he was never better dispos'd to be merry. The waiter soon made his appearance with preparations for dinner, a table was lent us by the goaler, who seemed remarkably assiduous, the wine was dispos'd in order, and two very well-drest dishes were brought in.

My daughter had not yet heard of her poor brother's melancholy situation, and we all seemed unwilling to damp her chearfulness by the relation. But it was in vain that I attempted to appear chearful, the circumstances of my unfortunate son broke through all efforts to dissemble; so that I was at last obliged to damp our mirth by relating his misfortunes, and wishing that he might be permitted to share with us in this little interval of satisfaction. After my guests were recovered from the consternation my account had produced, I requested also that Mr Jenkinson, a fellow-prisoner might be admitted, and the goaler granted my request with an air of unusual submission. The clanking of my son's irons was no sooner heard along the passage, than his sister ran impatiently to meet him; while Mr Burchell, in the mean time, asked me if my son's name were George, to which replying in the affirmative, he still continued silent. As soon as my boy entered the room, I could perceive he regarded Mr Burchell with a look of astonishment and

reverence. "Come on", cried I, "my son, though we are fallen very low, yet Providence has been pleased to grant us some small relaxation from pain. Thy sister is restored to us, and there is her deliverer: to that brave man it is that I am indebted for yet having a daughter; give him, my boy, the hand of friendship, he deserves our warmest gratitude".

My son seemed all this while regardless of what I said, and still continued fixed at respectful distance.—"My dear brother", cried his sister, "why don't you thank my good deliverer; the brave should ever love each other".

He still continued his silence and astonishment, till our guest at last perceived himself to be known, and assuming all his native dignity, desired my son to come forward. Never before had I seen any thing so truly majestic as the air he assumed upon this occasion. The greatest object in the universe, says a certain philosopher, is a good man struggling with adversity; yet there is still a greater, which is the good man that comes to relieve it. After he had regarded my son for some time with a superior air, "I again find", said he, "unthinking boy, that the same crime"—But here he was interrupted by one of the goaler's servants, who came to inform us that a person of distinction, who had driven into town

with a chariot and several attendants, sent his respects to the gentleman that was with us, and begged to know when he should think proper to be waited upon,—“Bid the fellow wait”, cried our guest, “till I shall have leisure to receive him”; and then turning to my son, “I again find, Sir”, proceeded he, “that you are guilty of the same offence for which you once had my reproof, and for which the law is now preparing its justest punishments. You imagine, perhaps, that a contempt for your own life, gives you a right to take that of another: but where, Sir, is the difference between a duellist, who hazards a life of no value, and the murderer who acts with greater security? Is it any diminution of the gamester’s fraud, when he alledges that he has staked a counter?”

“Alas, Sir”, cried I, “whoever you are, pity the poor misguided creature; for what he has done was in obedience to a deluded mother, who in the bitterness of her resentment required him upon her blessing to avenge her quarrel. Here, Sir, is the letter, which will serve to convince you of her imprudence, and diminish his guilt”.

He took the letter, and hastily read it over. “This”, says he, “though not a perfect excuse, is such a palliation of his fault, as induces me to forgive him. And now, Sir”, continued he, kindly taking

my son by the hand, "I see you are surprised at finding me here; but I have often visited prisons upon occasions less interesting. I am now come to see justice done to a worthy man, for whom I have the most sincere esteem. I have long been a disguised spectator of the father's benevolence. I have at his little dwelling enjoyed respect uncontaminated by flattery, and have received that happiness that courts could not give, from the amusing simplicity round his fire-side. My nephew has been apprized of my intentions of coming here, and I find it arrived; it would be wronging him and you to condemn him without examination: if there be injury, there shall be redress; and this I may say without boasting, that none have ever taxed the injustice of Sir William Thornhill".

We now found the personage whom we had so long entertained as an harmless amusing companion, was no other than the celebrated Sir William Thornhill, to whose virtues and singularities scarce any were strangers. The poor Mr Burchell was in reality a man of large fortune and great interest, to whom senates listened with applause, and whom party heard with conviction; who was the friend of his country, but loyal to his king. My poor wife recollecting her former familiarity, seemed to shrink with

apprehension; but Sophia, who a few moments before thought him her own, now perceiving the immense distance to which he was removed by fortune, was unable to conceal her tears.

“ Ah, Sir ”, cried my wife, with a piteous aspect, “ how is it possible that I can ever have your forgiveness; the slights you received from me the last time I had the honour of seeing you at our house, and the jokes which I audaciously threw out, these jokes, Sir, I fear can never be forgiven ”.

“ My dear good lady ”, returned he with a smile, “ if you had your joke, I had my answer: I’ll leave it to all the company if mine were not as good as yours. To say the truth, I know no body whom I am disposed to be angry with at present but the fellow who so frightened my little girl here. I had not even time to examine the rascal’s person so as to describe him in an advertisement. Can you tell me, Sophia, my dear, whether you should know him again ”?

“ Indeed, Sir ”, replied she, “ I can’t be positive; yet now I recollect he had a large mark over one of his eye brows ”. “ I ask pardon, Madam ”, interrupted Jenkinson, who was by, “ but be so good as to inform me if the fellow wore his own red hair ”?—“ Yes, I think so ”, cried Sophia;

—“ And did your honour ” , continued he ; turning to Sir William , “ observe the length ” of his legs ” ? —“ I can’t be sure of their ” length ” , cried the Baronet , but I am con- ” vinced of their swiftness ; for he out-ran ” me , which is what I thought few men in ” the kingdom could have done ” . —“ Please ” your honour ” , cried Jenkinson , “ I know ” the man : it is certainly the same ; the ” best runner in England ; he has beaten ” Pinwire of Newcastle , Timothy Baxter is ” his name , I know him perfectly , and the ” very place of his retreat this moment ” . If your honour will bid Mr Goaler let ” two of his men go with me , I’ll engage ” to produce him to you in an hour at far- ”thest ” . Upon this the goaler was called , who instantly appearing . Sir William de- manded if he knew him . “ Yes , please ” your honour ” , reply’d the goaler , “ I know ” Sir William Thornhill well , and every ” body that knows any thing of him , will ” desire to know more of him ” . —“ Well ” then ” , said the Baronet , “ my request is , ” that you will permit this man and two ” of your servants to go upon a message by ” my authority , and as I am in the commis- ” sion of the peace , I undertake to secure ” you ” . —“ Your promise is sufficient ” , replied the other , “ and you may at a mi- ” nute’s warning send them over England ” whenever your honour thinks fit ” .

In pursuance of the goaler's compliance, Jenkinson was dispatched in search of Timothy Baxter, while we were amused with the assiduity of our youngest boy Bill, who had just come in and climbed up to Sir William's neck in order to kiss him. His mother was going immediately to chastise his familiarity, but the worthy man prevented her; and taking the child, all ragged as he was, upon his knee, "What, Bill, you "chubby rogue", cried he, "do you re- "member your old friend Burchell; and "Dick too, my honest veteran, are you "here, you shall find I have not forgot you". So saying, he gave each a large piece of gingerbread, which the poor fellows eat very heartily, as they had got that morning but a very scanty breakfast.

We now sat down to dinner, which was almost cold; but previously, my arm still continuing painful, Sir William wrote a prescription, for he had made the study of physic his amusement, and was more than moderately skilled in the profession: this being sent to an apothecary who lived in the place, my arm was dressed, and I found almost instantaneous relief. We were waited upon at dinner by the goaler himself, who was willing to do our guest all the honour in his power. But before we had well dined, another message was brought from his nephew, desiring permission to

appear, in order to vindicate his innocence and honour, with which request the Baronet complied, and desired Mr Thornhill to be introduced.

C H A P. X X X I.

Former benevolence now repaid with unexpected interest.

M R THORNHILL made his entrance with a smile, which he seldom wanted, and was going to embrace his uncle, which the other repulsed with an air of disdain. « No fawning, Sir, at present », cried the Baronet, with a look of severity, « the only way to my heart is by the road of honour; but here I only see complicated instances of falsehood, cowardice, and oppression. How is it, Sir, that this poor man, for whom I know you professed a friendship, is used thus hardly? His daughter vilely seduced, as a recompence for his hospitality, and he himself thrown into a prison, perhaps but for resenting the insult. His son too, whom you feared to face as a man—”

“ Is it possible, Sir », interrupted his nephew, “ that my uncle could object that as a crime which his repeated instructions alone have persuaded me to avoid ».

“ Your rebuke », cried Sir William, “ is

» just ; you have acted in this instance prudently and well , though not quite as your father would have done : my brother indeed was the soul of honour ; but thou—yes , you have acted in this instance perfectly right , and it has my warmest approbation ».

“ And I hope ” , said his nephew , “ that the rest of my conduct will not be found to deserve censure . I appeared , Sir , with this gentleman’s daughter at some places of public amusement ; thus what was levity , scandal called by a harsher name , and it was reported that I had debauched her . I waited on her father in person , willing to clear the thing to his satisfaction , and he received me only with insult and abuse . As for the rest with regard to his being here , my attorney and steward can best inform you , as I commit the management of business entirely to them . If he has contracted debts and is unwilling or even unable to pay them , it is their busines to proceed in this manner , and I see no hardship or injustice in pursuing the most legal means of redress ».

“ If this ” , cried Sir William , “ be as you have stated it , there is nothing unpardonable in your offence , and though your conduct might have been more generous in not suffering this gentleman to be oppressed by subordinate tyranny , yet it has been at least equitable ».

“ He cannot contradict a single particular ”, replied the ‘Squire, “ I defy him to do so , and several of my servants are ready to attest what I say. Thus, Sir ”, continued he , finding that I was silent , for in fact I could not contradict him , “ thus , “ Sir , my own innocence is vindicated ; but though at your intreaty I am ready to forgive this gentleman every other offence , yet his attempts to lessen me in your esteem , excite a resentment that I cannot govern. And this too at a time when his son was actually preparing to take away my life ; this , I say , was such guilt , that I am determined to let the law take its course. I have here the challenge that was sent me , and two witnesses to prove it ; and even though my uncle himself should dissuade me , which I know he will not , yet I will see public justice done , and he shall suffer for it ”.

“ Thou monster ”, cried my wife , “ had thou not had vengeance enough already , but must my poor boy feel thy cruelty ? I hope that good Sir William will protect us , for my son is as innocent as a child ; I am sure he is , and never did harm to man ”.

“ Madam ”, replied the good man , “ your wishes for his safety are not greater than mine ; but I am sorry to find his guilt too plain ; and if my nephew persists ”—

But

But the appearance of Jenkinson and the goaler's two servants now called off our attention, who entered, hauling in a tall man, very genteelly drest, and answering the description already given of the ruffian who had carried off my daughter—"Here", cried Jenkinson, pulling him in, "here we have him, and if ever there was a candidate for Tyburn, this is one".

The moment Mr Thornhill perceived the prisoner, and Jenkinson, who had him in custody, he seemed to shrink back with terror. His face became pale with conscious guilt; and he would have withdrawn; but Jenkinson, who perceived his design, stopt him—"What, 'Squire', cried he, "are you ashamed of your two old acquaintances, Jenkinson and Baxter? but this is the way that all great men forget their friends, though I am resolved we will not forget you. Our prisoner, please your honour", continued he, turning to Sir William, "has already confessed all. He declares that it was Mr Thornhill who first put him upon this affair, that he gave him the clothes he now wears to appear like a gentleman, and furnished him with the post-chaise. The plan was laid between them that he should carry off the young lady to a place of safety, and that there he should threaten and terrify her; but Mr

» Thornhill was to come in, in the mean
» time, as if by accident, to her rescue, and
» that they should fight awhile, and then he
» was to run off, by which Mr Thornhill
» would have the better opportunity of
» gaining her affections himself under the
» character of her defender ».

Sir William remembered the coat to have been frequently worn by his nephew, and all the rest the prisoner himself confirmed by a more circumstantial account; concluding, that Mr Thornhill had often declared to him that he was in love with both sisters at the same time.

“Heavens”, cried Sir William, “what a viper have I been fostering in my bosom! And so fond of public justice too as he seemed to be. But he shall have it; secure him, Mr Goaler—yet hold, I fear there is not legal evidence to detain him.”

Upon this, Mr Thornhill, with the utmost humility, intreated that two such abandoned wretches might not be admitted as evidences against him, but that his servants should be examined.—“Your servants”, replied Sir William, “wretch call them yours no longer: but come, let us hear what those fellows have to say; let his butler be called”.

When the butler was introduced, he soon perceived by his former master’s looks that all his power was now over. “Tell me

cried Sir William sternly, " have you ever
seen your master and that fellow drest up
in his clothes in company together "? Yes ,
" please your honour ", cried the butler,
" a thousand times : he was the man that
" always brought him his ladies ".—" How ",
interrupted young Mr Thornhill, " this to
" my face " !—" Yes ", replied the butler,
" or to any man's face . " To tell you a
truth, Master Thornhill , I never either
loved you or liked you , and I don't care
if I tell you now a piece of my mind ".—
" now then ", cried Jenkinson , " tell his
honour whether you know any thing of
me ".—" I can't say ", replied the butler,
" that I know much good of you . The night
that gentleman's daughter was deluded to our
house, you were one of them ".—" So then ",
cried Sir William , " I find you have brought a
very fine witness to prove your innocence :
thou stain to humanity ! to associate with such
wretches " ! (But continuing his examination) " You tell me , Mr Butler , that this was
the person who brought him this old gentle-
man's daughter ".——" No , please your
honour ", replied the butler , " he did not
bring her , for the 'Squire himself undertook
that business ; but he brought the priest that
pretended to marry them ".—" It is but too
true ", cried Jenkinson , " I cannot deny it ,
that was the employment assigned me , and
I confess it to my confusion ".

“ Good heavens ! ” exclaimed the Baronet, “ how every new discovery of his villainy alarms me. All his guilt is now too plain, and I find his present prosecution was dictated by tyranny, cowardice, and revenge ; at my request, Mr Goaler, set this young officer, now your prisoner, free, and trust to me for the consequences. I’ll make it my business to set the affair in a proper light to my friend the magistrate who has committed him. But where is the unfortunate young lady herself ? let her appear to confront this wretch ; I long to know by what arts he has seduced her honour. Intreat her to come in. Where is she ? ”

“ Ah, Sir ”, said I, “ that question stings me to the heart : I was once indeed happy in a daughter, but her miseries——” Another interruption here prevented me; for who should make her appearance but Miss Arabella Willmot, who was next day to have been married to Mr Thornhill. Nothing could equal her surprise at seeing Sir William and his nephew here before her ; for her arrival was quite accidental. It happened that she and the old gentleman her father, were passing through the town on their way to her aunt’s, who had insisted that her nuptials with Mr Thornhill should be consummated at her house ; but stopping for refreshment, they put up at an inn

the other end of the town. It was there from the window that the young lady happened to observe one of my little boys playing in the street, and instantly sending a footman to bring the child to her, she learnt from him some account of our misfortunes; but was still kept ignorant of young Mr Thornhill's being the cause. Though her father made several remonstrances on the impropriety of going to a prison to visit us, yet they were ineffectual; she desired the child to conduct her, which he did, and it was thus she surprised us at a juncture so unexpected.

Nor can I go on, without a reflection on those accidental meetings, which, tho' they happen every day, seldom excite our surprize but upon some extraordinary occasion. To what a fortuitous concurrence do we not owe every pleasure and convenience of our lives. How many seeming accidents must unite before we can be clothed or fed. The peasant must be disposed to labour, the shower must fall, the wind fill the merchant's sail, or numbers must want the usual supply.

We all continued silent for some moments; while my charming pupil, which was the name I generally gave this young lady; united in her looks compassion and astonishment, which gave new finishings to her beauty. "Indeed, my dear Mr Thornhill", said she to the Squire, who she supposed

was come here to succour and not to oppress ; " I take it a little unkindly that you " should come here without me, or never inform me of the situation of a family so dear to us both : you know I should take as much pleasure in contributing to the relief of my reverend old master here , whom I shall ever esteem , as you can . But I find that , like your uncle , you take a pleasure in doing good in secret ".

" He find pleasure in doing good " ! cried Sir William , interrupting her . " No , my dear , his pleasures are as base as he is . You see in him , Madam , as complete a villain as ever disgrac'd humanity . A wretch , who after having deluded this poor man's daughter , after plotting against the innocence of her sister , has thrown the father into prison , and the eldest son into fetters , because he had courage to face his betrayer . And give me leave , Madam , now to congratulate you upon an escape from the embraces of such a monster .

" O goodness " , cried the lovely girl , how have I been deceived ! Mr Thorndhill informed me for certain , that this gentleman's eldest son , Captain Primrose , was gone off to America with his new-married lady .

" My sweetest Miss " , cried my wife , " he has told you nothing but falsehoods . My

» son George never left the kingdom , nor
» never was married . Tho' you have for-
» saken him , he has always loved you too
» well to think of any body else ; and I have
» heard him say , he would die a bachelor for
» your sake . She then expatiated on the
sincerity of her son's passion , she set his duel
with Mr Thornhill in a proper light , from
thence she made a rapid digression to the
'Squire's debaucheries , his pretended mar-
riages , and ended with a most insulting pic-
ture of his cowardice .

" Good heavens ! " cried Miss Willmot ,
" how very near have I been to the brink of
ruin ! But how great is my pleasure to
have escaped it ! Ten thousand falsehoods
has this gentleman told me ! He had at
last art enough to persuade me that my
promise to the only man I esteemed was
no longer binding , since he had been un-
faithful . By his falsehoods I was taught to
detest one equally brave and generous » .

But by this time my son was freed from
the incumbrances of justice . Mr Jenkinson
also , who had acted as his *valet-de-chambre* ,
had dressed up his hair , and furnished him
with whatever was necessary to make a gen-
teel appearance . He now therefore entered
handsomely drest in his regimentals , and ,
without vanity , (for I am above it) he ap-
peared as handsome a fellow as ever wore a
military dress . As he entered , he made

Miss Wilmot a modest and distant bow, for he was not as yet acquainted with the change which the eloquence of his mother had wrought in his favour. But no decorums could restrain the impatience of his blushing mistress to be forgiven. Her tears, her looks, all contributed to discover the real sensations of her heart for having forgotten her former promise, and having suffered herself to be deluded by an impostor. My son appeared amazed at her condescension, and could scarce believe it real—“Sure, ” Madam”, cried he, “this is but delusion! ” I can never have merited this! To be blest thus is to be too happy”.—“No, ” Sir”, replied she, “I have been deceived, basely deceived, else nothing could have ever made me unjust to my promise. You know my friendship, you have long known it; but forget what I have done, and as you once had my warmest vows of constancy, you shall now have them repeated; and be assured, that if your Arabella cannot be yours, she shall never be another’s”.—“And no others you shall be”, cried Sir William, “if I have any influence with your father”.

This hint was sufficient for my son Moses, who immediately flew to the inn where the old gentleman was, to inform him of every circumstance that had happened. But in the mean time, the 'Squire perceiving

that he was on every side undone , now finding that no hopes were left from flattery or dissimulation , concluded that his wisest way would be to turn and face his pursuers. Thus laying aside all shame , he appeared the open hardy villain. « I find » then » , cried he , « that I am to expect no » justice here ; But I am resolved it shall be » done me. You shall know , Sir » , turning to Sir William , « I am no longer a poor de- » pendent upon your favours. I scorn them. » Nothing can keep Miss Wilmot's fortune » from me , which , I thank her father's » assiduity , is pretty large. The articles , and » a bond for her fortune , are signed , and » safe in my possession. It was her fortune , » not her person , that induced me to wish » for this match , and possessed of the one , » let who will take the other ».

This was an alarming blow , Sir William was sensible of the justice of his claims , for he had been instrumental in drawing up the marriage-articles himself. Miss Wilmot therefore perceiving that her fortune was irretrievably lost , turning to my son , she asked if the loss of fortune could lessen her value to him. « Though fortune » , said she , is out » of my power , at least I have my hand to » give ».

« And that , Madam » , cried her real lover , « was indeed all that you ever had to give ; at least all that I ever thought worth

» the acceptance. And I now protest, my
» Arabella, by all that's happy, your want
» of fortune this moment increases my plea-
» sure, as it serves to convince my sweet
» girl of my sincerity ».

Mr Wilmot now entering, he seemed not a little pleased at the danger his daughter had just escaped, and readily consented to a dissolution of the match. But finding that her fortune, which was secured to Mr Thornhill by bond, would not be given up, nothing could exceed his disappointment. He now saw that his money must all go to enrich one who had no fortune of his own. He could bear his being a rascal; but to want an equivalent to his daughter's fortune was wormwood. He sat therefore for some minutes employed in the most mortifying speculations, till Sir William attempted to lessen his anxiety.—
“I must confess, Sir”, cried he, “that your present disappointment does not entirely displease me. Your immoderate passion for wealth is now justly punished. But though the young lady cannot be rich, she has still a competence sufficient to give content. Here you see an honest young soldier, who is willing to take her without fortune; they have long loved each other, and for the friendship I bear his father, my interest shall not be wanting for his promotion. Leave then that ambition which disappoints you, and for once ad-

» mit happiness which courts your acceptance ».

“ Sir William ”, replied the old gentleman, “ be assured I never yet forced her inclinations, nor will I now. If she still continues to love this young gentleman, let her have him with all my heart. There is still, thank Heaven, some fortune left, and your promise will make it something more. Only let my old friend here (meaning me) give me a promise of settling six thousand pounds upon my girl, if ever he should come to his fortune, and I am ready this night to be the first to join them together ”.

As it now remained with me to make the young couple happy, I readily gave a promise of making the settlement he required, which, to one who had so little expectations as I, was no great favour. We had now therefore the satisfaction of seeing them fly into each other’s arms in a transport. “ After all my misfortunes ”, cried my son George, “ to be thus rewarded! Sure this is more than I could ever have presumed to hope for. To be possessed of all that’s good, and after such an interval of pain! My warmest wishes could never rise so high ” !——“ Yes, my George ”, returned his lovely bride, “ now let the wretch take my fortune; since you are happy without it, so am I. O what an exchange

» have I made from the basest of men to
» the dearest, best!—Let him enjoy our
» fortune, I now can be happy even in in-
» digence ».——“ And I promise you »,
cried the 'Squire, with a malicious grin,
» that I shall be very happy with what you
» despise ».——“ Hold, hold, Sir », cried
Jenkinson, “ there are two words to that
» bargain. As for that lady's fortune, Sir,
» you shall never touch a single sliver of it:
» Pray your honour », continued he to Sir
William, “ can the 'Squire have this lady's
» fortune if he be married to another »?
»—“ How can you make such a simple de-
» mand », replied the Baronet, “ undoubted-
» edly he cannot ».——“ I am sorry for
» that », cried Jenkinson; “ for as this gen-
» tleman and I have been old fellow sporters,
» I have a friendship for him. But I must de-
» clare, well as I love him, that his contract
» is not worth a tobacco-stopper, for he is
» married already ».——You lie, like a
» rascal », returned the 'Squire, who seem-
ed rouzed by this insult, “ I never was
» legally married to any woman ».——
» indeed, begging your honour's pardon »,
replied the other, “ you were; and I hope
» you will shew a proper return of friend-
» ship to your own honest Jenkinson, who
» brings you a wife, and if the company
» restrain their curiosity a few minutes,
» they shall see her ».——So saying, he

went off with his usual celerity , and left us all unable to form any probable conjecture as to his design.—“ Ay let him go ” , cried the 'Squire , “ whatever else I may have done , I defy him there. I am too old now to be frightened with squibs ”.

“ I am surprized ” , said the Baronet , “ what the fellow can intend by this. Some low piece of humour I suppose ” !——“ Perhaps , Sir ” , replied I , “ he may have a more serious meaning. For when we reflect on the various schemes this gentleman laid to seduce innocence , perhaps some man more artful than the rest has been found able to deceive him. When we consider what numbers he has ruined , how many parents now feel with anguish the infamy and the contamination which he has brought into their families , it would not surprise me if some one of them ——Amazement ! Do I see my lost daughter ! Do I hold her ! It is , it is my life , my happiness. I thought thee lost my Olivia , yet still I hold thee——and still shalt thou live to bless me ” .—The warmest transports of the fondest lover were not greater than mine when I saw him introduce my child , and held my daughter in my arms , whose silence only spoke her raptures. “ And art thou returned to me , my darling ” , cried I , “ to be my comfort in age ” !——“ That she

» is », cried Jenkinson, « and make much
» of her, for she is your own honourable
» child, and as honest a woman as any in the
» whole room, let the other be who she
» will. And as for you, 'Squire, as sure
» as you stand there, this young lady is
» your lawful wedded wife. And to con-
» vince you that I speak nothing but
» truth, here is the licence by which you
» were married together ». — So saying,
he put the licence into the Baronet's hands,
who read it, and found it perfect in every
respect. « And now, Gentlemen », continued he, « I find you are surprized at all this,
» but a few words will explain the difficul-
» ty. That there 'Squire of renown, for
» whom I have a great friendship, but that's
» between ourselves, has often employed
» me in doing odd little things for him. A-
» mong the rest, he commissioned me to pro-
» cure him a false licence, and a false priest,
» in order to deceive this young lady. But
» as I was very much his friend, what did
» I do, but I went and got a true licence,
» and a true priest, and married them both as
» fast as the cloth could make them. Per-
» haps you'll think it was generosity that
» made me do all this. But no. To my
» shame I confess it, my only design was to
» keep the licence and let the 'Squire know
» that I could prove it upon him whenever
» I thought proper, and so make him come

» down whenever I wanted money ». A burst of pleasure now seemed to fill the whole apartment; our joy reached even to the common room, where the prisoners themselves sympathized,

*And shook their chains
In transport and rude harmony.*

Happiness expanded upon every face, and even Olivia's cheek seemed flushed with pleasure. To be thus restored to reputation, to friends, and fortune at once, was a rapture sufficient to stop the progress of decay, and restore former health and vivacity. But perhaps among all, there was not one who felt sincerer pleasure than I. Still holding the dear loved child in my arms, I asked my heart if these transports were not delusion. « How could you, cried I, turning to Mr Jenkinson, how could you add to my » miseries by the story of her death ! But it » matters not, my pleasure at finding her » again, is more than a recompence for the » pain.

« As to your question », replied Jenkinson, « that is easily answered. I thought » the only probable means of freeing you » from prison, was by submitting to the » 'Squire, and consenting to his marriage » with the other young lady. But these » you had vowed never to grant while your » daughter was living, there was therefore

” no other method to bring things to bear ;
” but by persuading you that she was dead.
” I prevailed on your wife to join in the
” deceit , and we have not had a fit oppor-
” tunity of undeceiving you till now ”.

In the whole assembly now there only appeared two faces that did not glow with transport. Mr Thornhill's assurance had entirely forsaken him : he now saw the gulph of infamy and want before him , and trembled to take the plunge. He therefore fell on his knees before his uncle , and in a voice of piercing misery implored compassion. Sir William was going to spurn him away , but at my request he raised him , and after pausing a few moments , “ Thy ” vices , crimes , and ingratitude ” , cried he , “ deserve no tendernes ; yet thou ” shalt not be entirely forsaken , a bare ” competence shall be supplied , to support ” the wants of life , but not its follies. This ” young lady , thy wife , shall be put in ” possession of a third part of that fortune ” which once was thine , and from her ten- ” derness alone thou art to expect any ex- ” traordinary supplies for the future ”. He was going to express his gratitude for such kindness in a set speech ; but the Baronet prevented him by bidding him not aggrate his meanness , which was already but too apparent. He ordered him at the same time to be gone , and from all his former

domestics to chuse one such as he should think proper, which was all that should be granted to attend him.

As soon as he left us, Sir William very politely stept up to his new niece with a smile, and wished her joy. His example was followed by Miss Wilmot and her father; my wife too kissed her daughter with much affection, as, to use her own expression, she was now made an honest woman of. Sophia and Moses followed in turn, and even our benefactor Jenkinson desired to be admitted to that honour. Our satisfaction seemed scarce capable of increase. Sir William, whose greatest pleasure was in doing good, now looked round with a countenance open as the sun, and saw nothing but joy in the looks of all except that of my daughter Sophia, who, for some reasons we could not comprehend, did not seem perfectly satisfied. "I think now", cried he, with a smile, "that all the company, except one or two, seem perfectly happy. There only remains an act of justice for me to do. You are sensible, Sir", continued he, turning to me, "of the obligations we both owe Mr Jenkinson for his late assiduity in detecting a scoundrel. It is but just we should both reward him for it. Your youngest daughter, Miss Sophia, will, I am sure, make him very happy, and he shall have from

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» me five hundred pounds as her fortune;
» and upon this I am sure they can live very
» comfortably together. Come, Miss So-
» phia, what say you to this match of my
» making? Will you have him?—My
poor girl seemed almost sinking into her
mother's arms at the hideous proposal.
—“Have him, Sir”! cried she faintly.
» No, Sir, never”.—“What”, cried he
again, “not have Mr Jenkinson, your be-
» nefactor, an handsome young fellow, with
» five hundred pounds and good expecta-
» tions”?—I beg, Sir”, returned she, scarce
able to speak, “that you'll desist, and not
» make me so very wretched”.—
» Was ever such obstinacy known”, cried
he again, “to refuse a man whom the fa-
mily has such infinite obligations to, who
» has preserved your sister. What! not
» have him”?—No, Sir, never”, replied
she, angrily, I'd sooner die first”.—
» If that be the case then”, cried he, “if
you will not have him—I think I must
» have you myself”. And so saying, he
caught her to his breast with ardour. “My
» loveliest, my most sensible of girls”, cried
he, “how could you ever think your own
» Burchell could deceive you, or that Sa-
» William Thornhill could ever cease to ad-
» mire a mistress that loved him for himself
» alone? I have for some years sought for
» a woman, who, a stranger to my fortune

» could think that I had merit as a man.
» After having tried in vain , even amongst
» the pert and the ugly , how great at last
» must be my rapture to have made a con-
» quest over such sense and such heavenly
» beauty ». Then turning to Jenkinson , « As
» I cannot , Sir , part with this young lady
» myself , for she has taken a fancy to the
» cut of my face , all the recompence I
» can make is to give you her fortune , and
» you may call upon my steward to mor-
» row for five hundred pounds ». Thus we
had all our compliments to repeat , and
Lady Thornhill underwent the same round
of ceremony that her sisters had done be-
fore. In the mean time , Sir William's gen-
tleman appeared to tell us that the equipa-
ges were ready to carry us to the inn ,
where every thing was prepared for our
reception. My wife and I led the van , and
left those gloomy mansions of sorrow. The
generous Baronet ordered forty pounds to
be distributed among the prisoners , and Mr
Wilmot , induced by his example , gave half
that sum. We were received below by the
shouts of the villagers , and I saw and shook
by the hand two or three of my honest pa-
rishioners , who were among the number.
They attended us to our inn , where a sum-
ptuous entertainment was provided , and coar-
ser provisions distributed in great quantities
among the populace.

After supper, as my spirits were exhausted by the alternation of pleasure and pain which they had sustained during the day, I asked permission to withdraw, and leaving the company in the midst of their mirth, as soon as I found myself alone, I poured out my heart in gratitude to the Giver of joy as well as of sorrow, and then slept undisturbed till morning.

C H A P. X X X I I.

The Conclusion.

THE next morning as soon as I awaked I found my eldest son sitting by my bedside, who came to increase my joy with another turn of fortune in my favour. First having released me from the settlement that I had made the day before in his favour, he let me know that my merchant who had failed in town was arrested at Antwerp, and there had given up effects to a much greater amount than what was due to his creditors. My boy's generosity pleased me almost as much as this unlooked for good fortune. But I had some doubts whether I ought in justice to accept his offer. While I was pondering upon this, Sir William entered the room, to whom I communicated my doubts. His opinion was, that as my son was already possessed of a very affluent fortune by his

marriage, I might accept his offer without my hesitation. His business, however, was to inform me, that as he had the night before sent for the licences, and expected them every hour, he hoped that I would not refuse my assistance in making all the company happy that morning. A footman entered while we were speaking, to tell us that the messenger was returned, and as I was by this time ready, I went down, where I found the whole company as merry as affluence and innocence could make them. However, as they were now preparing for a very solemn ceremony, their mirth entirely displeased me. I told them of the grave, becoming and sublime deportment they should assume upon this mystical occasion, and read them two homilies and a thesis of my own composing, in order to prepare them. Yet they still seemed perfectly refractory and ungovernable. Even as we were going along to church, to which I led the way, all gravity had quite forsaken them, and I was often tempted to turn back in indignation. In church a new dilemma arose, which promised no easy solution. This was, which couple should be married first; my son's bride warmly insisted, that Lady Thornhill, (that was to be) should take the lead; but this, the other refused with equal ardour, protesting she would not be guilty of such rudeness.

for the world. The argument was supported for some time between both with equal obstinacy and good breeding. But as I stood all this time with my book ready, I was at last quite tired of the contest, and shutting it, "I perceive", cried I, "that none of you have a mind to be married, and I think we had as good go back again; for I suppose there will be no business done here to-day".—This at once reduced them to reason. The Baronet and his Lady were first married, and then my son and his lovely partner.

I had previously that morning given orders that a coach should be sent for my honest neighbour Flamborough and his family, by which means, upon our return to the inn, we had the pleasure of finding the two Miss Flambourghs alighted before us. Mr Jenkinson gave his hand to the eldest, and my son Moses led up the other; (and I have since found that he has taken a real liking to the girl, and my consent and bounty he shall have whenever he thinks proper to demand them). We were no sooner returned to the inn, but numbers of my parishioners, hearing of my success, came to congratulate me, but among the rest were those who rose to rescue me, and whom I formerly rebuked with such sharpness. I told the story to Sir William, my son-in-law, who went out and reprove

them with great severity; but finding them quite disheartened by his harsh reproof, he gave them half a guinea a-piece to drink his health and raise their dejected spirits.

Soon after this we were called to a very genteel entertainment, which was drest by Mr Thornhill's cook. And it may not be improper to observe with respect to that gentleman, that he now resides in quality of companion at a relation's house, being very well liked and seldom sitting at the side-table, except when there is no room at the other, for they make no stranger of him. His time is pretty much taken up in keeping his relation, who is a little melancholy, in spirits, and in learning to blow the French-horn. My eldest daughter, however, still remembers him with regret; and she has even told me, though I make a great secret of it, that when he reforms she may be brought to relent. But to return, for I am not apt to digress thus, when we were to sit down to dinner our ceremonies were going to be renewed. The question was whether my eldest daughter, as being a maiden, should not sit above the two young ladies, but the debate was cut short by my son George, who proposed, that the company should sit indiscriminately, every gentleman by his lady. This was received with great approbation by all, excepting my wife, who I could perceive was not per-

fecly satisfied, as she expected to have had the pleasure of sitting at the head of the table and carving all the meat for all the company. But notwithstanding this, it is impossible to describe our good humour. I can't say whether we had more wit amongst us now than usual; but I am certain we had more laughing, which answered the end as well. One jest I particularly remember, old Mr Wilmot drinking to Moses, whose head was turned another way, my son replied, « Madam, I thank you ». Upon which the old gentleman, winking upon the rest of the company, observed that he was thinking of his mistress. At which jest I thought the two miss Flamboroughs would have died with laughing. As soon as dinner was over, according to my old custom, I requested that the table might be taken away, to have the pleasure of seeing all my family assembled once more by a chearful fire-side. My two little ones sat upon each knee, the rest of the company by their partners. I had nothing now on this side of the grave to wish for, all my cares were over, my pleasure was unspeakable. It now only remained that my gratitude in good fortune should exceed my former submission in adversity.

THE END.



ERRATA.

Pag. 101, lin. 9, *cri-*, read *cried*. — P. 116, l. 22,
it it was, r. it was. — P. 146, l. 10, give up up,
r. give up. — P. 197, l. 5, *desings*, r. *designs*. — P.
234, l. 21, *thir*, r. *their*. — P. 240, l. 22, *it it*,
r. it is. — P. 243, l. 3, *and and his*, r. *and his*.



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